

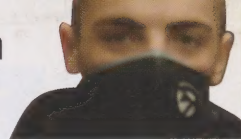


**London terror
attack**
HOME NEWS p20

**Budapest: Far
right homeland**
INVESTIGATION p34



**National Action
goes to camp**
INVESTIGATION p36

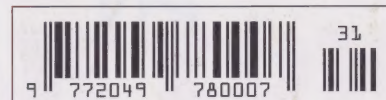


H P E not hate

Providing a positive antidote
to hate and intolerance

Mar-Apr 2017

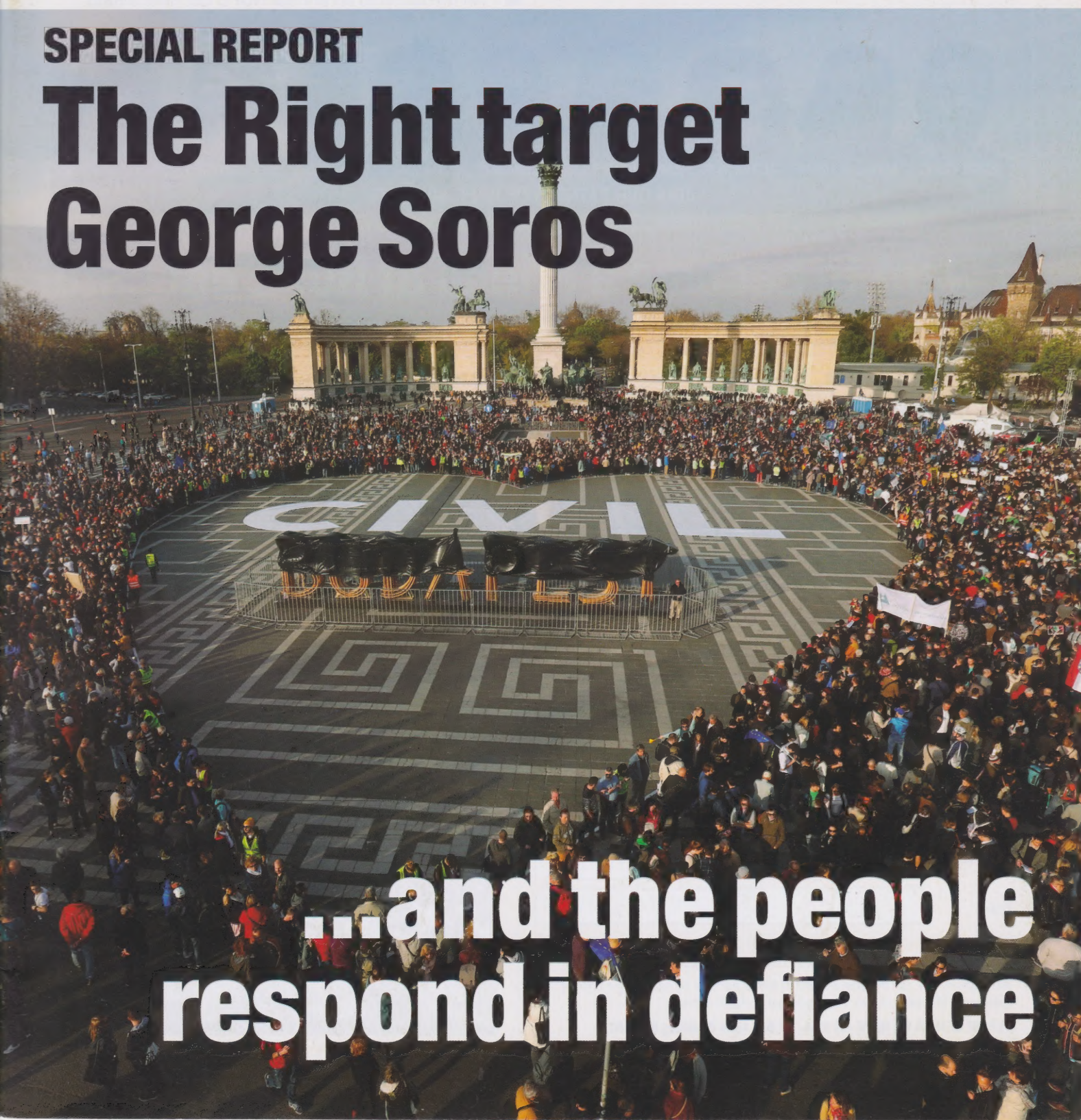
Issue no. 31 Price £3.50



www.hopenothate.org.uk

SPECIAL REPORT

The Right target George Soros



**...and the people
respond in defiance**

BECOME A FRIEND OF HOPE NOT HATE

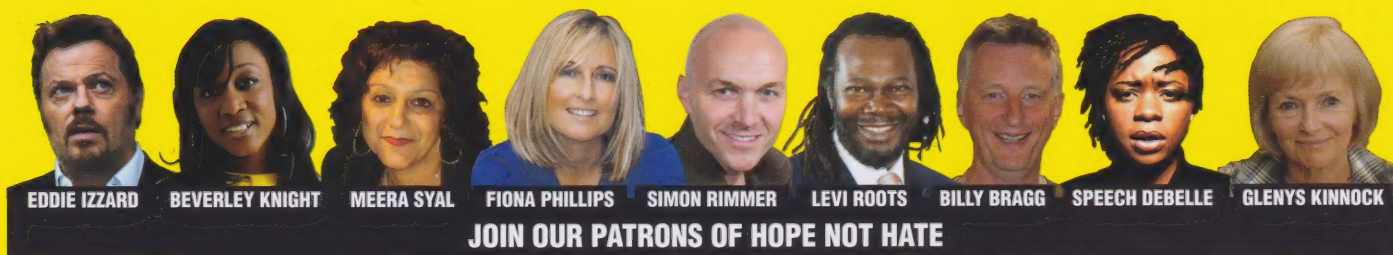


HOPE not hate challenges organised hate and intolerance within our society. We mobilise communities by providing a positive alternative to the politics of hate.

For as little as £5 a month you can play your part in ensuring that we continue our work to bring communities together in the face of hate.

In return for a small monthly donation, you will receive:

- Six issues of the *HOPE not hate* magazine every year
- A copy of all HOPE not hate publications
- An annual invitation to a private briefing with the HOPE not hate founder and Chief Executive, Nick Lowles
- An invitation to an annual HOPE not hate dinner



I want to become a Friend of HOPE not hate

Please complete the details on this form below or visit www.hopenothate.org.uk/friend

PAY BY STANDING ORDER

Dear Bank Manager, I want to make a monthly gift to HOPE not hate of **£5.00** or £ _____ each month until further notice, starting immediately, please debit the account below.

Your bank details

Bank name

Address

Postcode

Account no

Sort code

Signature

Date

Pay HOPE not hate (account no: 21603184, sort code 23-05-80, Metro Bank)
Alternatively you can become a friend of HOPE not hate by enclosing a cheque (minimum £60 per annum), made payable to HOPE not hate.

PLEASE RETURN TO: HOPE not hate, PO Box 1084 Wembley HA9 1HT.

Your details

Title

First name

Last name

Address

Postcode

Email

Telephone

HOPE not hate will not pass on your details to any third party

☐ HOPE not hate will occasionally contact you about our campaigns and supporter information. If you do NOT wish to receive any information please tick the box.

Please return to: **HOPE not hate, PO Box 1084 Wembley HA9 1HT**



Receive a
little HOPE every
two months.
Subscribe to
HOPE not hate
www.hopenothate.org.uk



HOPE not hate

An anti-fascist and
anti-racist publication

Mar-Apr 2017

Issue no. 31

ISSN 2049-7806

Editor
NICK LOWLES
nick@hopenothate.org.uk

European Editor
GRAEME ATKINSON

HOPE not hate is a bi-monthly
publication providing information on
hate groups and community initiatives
to combat them.

© HOPE not hate 2017

Write to us at:
HOPE not hate
PO Box 1084
Wembley HA9 1HT

t: 020 7952 1181
e: office@hopenothate.org.uk

www.hopenothate.org.uk

Join the conversation

256,091 likes
www.facebook.com/hope.n.hate
 57,079 followers
www.twitter.com/hopenothate



Nick Lowles

EDITOR

nick@hopenothate.org.uk



The lull before the storm

AS HOPE not hate goes to press, Theresa May has called a snap election. The Conservatives are likely to be returned to power with a bigger majority while Labour could lose heavily. The Liberal Democrats might pick up a few seats but their hoped-for resurgence as a reaction to Brexit Britain has so far not materialised.

The election is likely to see the continuing demise of UKIP. Research by Populus, commissioned by HOPE not hate, graphically shows the collapse in UKIP support across the country though its support will remain strong in areas where the BNP polled well in 2010. This reflects the core anti-immigrant segment of the UKIP vote and the party's clear drift to the right.

Former UKIP leader Nigel Farage and key donor Arron Banks have decided to sit out this election, preferring to keep their powder dry for the launch of a rival party.

While UKIP's vote could decrease by 40% compared with its 2015 vote as its voters switch to the Conservative Party – in the belief that it is delivering Brexit and thus substantially reducing immigration – this could soon change if expectations are not realised. A combination of Brexit not delivering economic improvements and immigration failing to drop substantially is likely to see resentment and anger rise which could well be exploited by UKIP or a new far right formation.

This election could well be the lull before the storm.

THE COUNTRY STANDS FIRM BUT...

It was with great relief that the British public stood firm against the Westminster terrorist attack and those who sought to exploit it where unable to garner much support.

Much of this was helped by the tone and reaction of the Government and the police. Their message was reassuring, inclusive and firm. British values of inclusivity and

tolerance were placed at the heart of the response and cross-community cooperation was actively sought.

Britain's Muslim communities also deserve a lot of credit as they played their part in lowering tensions and cross-community collaboration.

The feared anti-Muslim backlash, agitated for by the likes of Britain First and the English Defence League, failed to occur.

However, as our report in this magazine shows, the fact that the most mentioned person on twitter on the day of the attack was alt-right vlogger Paul Watson and Stephen Lennon's (aka Tommy Robinson) video-clip was watched millions of times is a big cause for concern.

FRANCE DECIDES

Front National (FN) leader Marine Le Pen has got through to the second round of the French Presidential election, where she faces a run off with centrist Emmanuel Macron. Le Pen will undoubtedly add to the 21% she secured in the first round but she is likely to be beaten.

While the size of her vote is worrying and could give the FN a platform for June's parliamentary election, it does herald another setback for the far right.

After the euphoria of Trump's surprise presidential victory in the US, some would make huge gains in European elections. That has not happened, with far right candidates failing in Austria, the Netherlands and now – it appears in France.

In the US, Trump seems to be ditching some of his more right-wing populist policies. However, we must not allow their defeats to instil complacency. The conditions that gave rise to Trump and the far right in the first place still exist and, left unaddressed, will only continue.

■ See our French Presidential election special at: <http://hopenothate.org.uk/research/french-election-special/>

INSIDE

PAGE 12



INVESTIGATION UKIP 2.0: THE PATRIOTIC ALLIANCE



TARGET SOROS – THE RIGHT'S FIXATION WITH GEORGE SOROS

PAGE 44



NEW INTERNATIONAL ALT-RIGHT MOVEMENT FORMED

HNH uses research, education and public engagement to challenge mistrust and racism, and helps to build communities that are inclusive, celebrate shared identities and are resilient to hate.

Initially established to counter the electoral rise of the BNP, HOPE not hate mobilises communities by providing a positive alternative to the politics of hate. HOPE not hate has over 214,000 online supporters and over 240,000 followers on Facebook. We are not aligned to any political party and will work with everyone wherever possible. HOPE not hate comprises HOPE not hate Ltd and our charitable wing, HOPE not hate Charitable Trust.

www.hopenothate.org.uk



6 Home News HOPE not hate receives award

7 Home News The smile that threw the EDL

8 International News Germany, AfD in troubled waters

11 Comment Taking a stand against liars

12 Investigation UKIP 2.0: The Patriotic Alliance

16 Analysis UKIP and the 2017 election candidates report

18 Comment Make Le Pen's "first step", the last.

20 Home News Social Media Reacts to the Westminster Attacks

24 Home News Westminster: the unity that followed the attacks

26 Investigation Target Soros

29 Investigation They can't silence a whole nation

30 Investigation Operation Stop Soros exposed

33 Investigation Budapest: The centre of a new rebellion

34 Investigation Far right homeland

36 Investigation National Action goes to camp with shiny new flags

40 International Squabbling Over Wilders' Crumbs

42 International Fascist meeting in Lyon draws speakers from across Europe

43 International Vona demands new referendum

44 International New international alt-right movement formed

46 Home News Stop fixing, start listening

CONTRIBUTORS



BERNARD RORKE

Hungarian-based journalist Bernard Rorke reports on the popular backlash against attempts to close down free speech



CAS MUDDÉ

Dutch political scientist Cas Mudde reflects on a disappointing election performance from Geert Wilders



SAFYA KHAN-RUF

HOPE not hate staff writer Safya Khan-Ruf writes from the post-industrial communities conference in Leeds

EXTREMISM ANALYSIS FASCISM RACISM HOPE INVESTIGATION COMMUNITY PREJUDICE CAMPAIGNING HATE INTELLIGENCE

HOPE not hate

An essential read for anyone who opposes the politics of hate.

Subscribe for just £20 a year (UK individuals only).

48 pages of investigations, features, interviews and commentary, HOPE not hate is a must for anyone who wants to see HOPE triumph over hate.



Subscribe to HOPE

Receive HOPE not hate
hot off the press

HOPE not hate is published six times a year. To receive your copy as soon as it is published fill out the form opposite

Or subscribe online at
www.hopenothate.org.uk/subscribe



Subscribe to HOPE not hate magazine

£20 UK individuals

£35 Non Europe individuals

£30 Europe individuals

£25 UK organisations

£40 All non-UK organisations

Please start my subscription with the next issue (cheques made payable to HOPE not hate)

Name

Address

Postcode

Amount £

Or pay by standing order

Please debit my account with the sum of £ _____ immediately and annually thereafter until cancelled by me in writing.

Your bank name & address

Postcode

Account No

Sort Code

Signature

Date

Pay **HOPE NOT HATE** (account no: 21603184, sort code 23-05-80, Metro Bank).

PLEASE RETURN TO: HOPE not hate, PO Box 1084 Wembley HA9 1HT.

HOPE not hate receives award

HOPE not hate has been given 10th place for its website and social media presence in the Best Activist websites on the planet awards by Feedspot, a specialist website company.

In fact, HOPE not hate was the highest-ranked European website.

The Best Activist blogs awards are drawn from thousands of top activist blogs using search and social metrics. The websites and blogs are ranked based on Google reputation and Google search ranking, influence and popularity on Facebook, twitter and other social media sites and quality and consistency of posts. Finally, Feedspot's editorial team and expert review consider the leading contenders.

Topping the chart was www.activistpost.com, a platform for independent journalists around the world.

Also in the Top 10 were freethepeople.org, trueactivist.org and the Tea Party group, freedomworks.org.

HOPE not hate video tops February Facebook list

A two-minute HOPE not hate film supporting the rights of EU citizens living in the UK was the most watched political content on Facebook in the UK in a single day. The video was watched 1.42m times in

the first 24 hours it went live.

The next most viewed political content was a short speech by Nigel Farage watched 772,000 times.

The HOPE not hate video, entitled: 'UK man speaks out on EU migrants' – watched in total by 3.3m by people in 72 hours – depicted a man travelling around Britain extolling the virtues of those EU citizens in the UK. It was posted on Facebook shortly before MPs rejected a motion to guarantee the rights of EU citizens to remain in the UK after Brexit.

Coldplay provide song to HOPE not hate

Coldplay, one of the world's most successful and popular bands, last month gave permission for HOPE not hate to use one of its songs for a video to accompany the new HOPE not hate website.

The video is designed to encapsulate our mission of erasing hate with hope. The film was narrated by TV actor John Simm and was produced by Silverfish TV.



(top left) HOPE not hate film supporting the rights of EU citizens living in the UK was the most watched political content on Facebook in the UK in a single day. (left) Still from the video to accompany the new HOPE not hate website. (above) John Simm in the recording studio.

The smile that threw the EDL

Matthew Collins reports



Saffiyah Khan (left) faces down English Defence League (EDL) protester Ian Crossland during a demonstration in the city of Birmingham, in the wake of the Westminster terror attack.

THERE WAS A TIME when any demonstration by the English Defence League (EDL) would be met with fear and violence. Everywhere the EDL went, its drink-fuelled fans followed went looking for trouble and a riot to accompany their not entirely clear political agenda.

And very often they found trouble, with the fear the EDL brought with it generating inevitable resistance. Whole localities would grind to a halt and close for the day as hundreds of angry and drunken racists roamed the streets.

In the past seven or eight years it is impossible to count exactly how many people – either for or against the EDL hate gang – have been arrested at such events.

With the EDL's decline – and there are numerous factors and reasons for it – has come a stubborn indifference. People in towns and cities that still get blighted by the EDL have learned to navigate around its unpleasant presence and the EDL can no longer make demands of the police and the authorities as to what it wants to do and how it wants to do it.

Mosques now throw open their doors and hold community tea parties when the EDL comes to town. Picnics and fun days divert the attention away from the moronic and appalling words and behaviour. The group is no longer seen as a major cause of disorder.

In Birmingham earlier this month, the group held a national demonstration to highlight the supposed 'Islamification' of Britain's second city. A week before fewer than fifty had marched in London.

The EDL's leadership, finding itself under-fire from within for a demise that keeps forcing it deeper and deeper into the mire of irrelevance and an increasing campaign of derision from those opposed to it, needed Birmingham to be a success. It promised coaches and minibuses full of supporters but again, the numbers were low and the behaviour was predictably poor.

No sooner had the EDL supporters shuffled their drunken way to Birmingham's Centenary Square, a fight broke out between two of their own. Things got worse as EDL supporters became aggressive to a small group of Muslim women and began shouting

obscurities at them.

Ian Crossland, the unwashed and degenerate leader of the EDL, tried to intervene and found himself overshadowed and looked down upon by a courageous young Muslim woman.

By the end of the day, her face and the forlorn and belittled side of Crossland's head were national news. A determined young Muslim woman named Saffiyah Khan had put Crossland, Sheffield's notorious thug and bully, in his place.

The picture has similar symbolism to that of Tess Asplund, photographed in Sweden last year with fist raised in lone protest against nazi marchers. Khan only needed a smile. It said more than enough as she dwarfed the revolting Crossland.

She said: "(The EDL supporter) was poking his finger in my face, but I just stood there. I didn't do anything, I wasn't interested, that wasn't my intention ... I didn't realise how many people would be so supportive, so it was worth it."

By Monday, she was on *Woman's Hour*. Crossland was in bed. "She's lucky she's got any teeth left," he groaned on Facebook.

Indeed she is.

BELGIUM | Dewinter for mayor in Antwerp

WIM HAELSTERMAN FOR AFF/VERZET – RÉSISTANCES IN BRUSSELS.

DESPITE LOUD INTERNAL and external criticism of his unceasingly arrogant conduct, Vlaams Belang (VB) celebrity Philip Dewinter will head his extremist party's list in Antwerp for the forthcoming mayoral elections in October 2018.

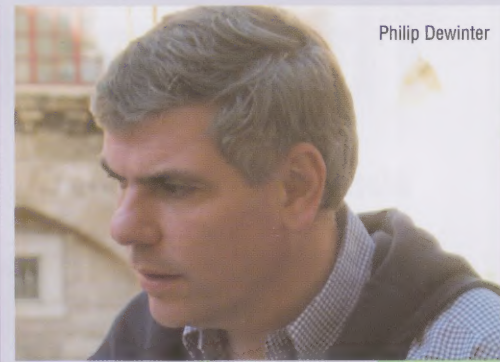
Dewinter will compete against current mayor Bart De Wever of the nationalist N-VA, the deputy prime minister Kris Peeters and the secretary of state Philippe De Backer among others. In other words: a real clash of the titans for the mayoralty of the largest Flemish city lies ahead.

The VB's Antwerp board, the regional party administration that unites all Antwerp branch presidents and representatives, elected Dewinter unanimously, not a big surprise as Antwerp and the wider Antwerp region are Dewinter's backyard. His election

demonstrates that the party has no viable alternative to him.

"Philip is our guarantee for a clear and radical campaign," stated Jan Penris, chairman of the regional administration and one of the VB's remaining MPs. Dewinter told the press he will focus on "immigration and Islamisation" in his campaign, using the slogan "Antwerp is ours".

Dewinter was recently criticised for visiting Syrian president Assad again in support of his regime. This visit made Belgian prime minister Charles Michel declare in the federal parliament: "You are a racist, xenophobic, you are fond of a mass killer"....tough words rarely heard in the chamber. The PM's harsh condemnation received the support of all parties except the VB.



Philip Dewinter

GERMANY | AfD in troubled waters

FROM MICHAEL KLEIN IN BERLIN

THE ALTERNATIVE for Germany (AfD), the new right-wing populist political party that has rocked the political system in Germany, is now deeply divided. In February, a speech by Thuringian party leader Björn Höcke in Dresden created public uproar when he branded the Berlin Holocaust memorial "a shame" and demanded a U-turn over how Germany commemorates its history.

After some weeks of fractious debate, the AfD leadership decided to expel him from the party and some powerful funders withdrew support. While Höcke apologised to party members – tactically – for inappropriate wording, most observers are convinced that he will not be forced out of the party. At the same time, the AfD's committee procedure is being used to soften criticism by more moderate party followers. Meanwhile, party star Frauke Petry has stepped down as the AfD's lead election candidate.

In North Rhine Westphalia where elections are due in May – just four months ahead of the national elections – the AfD's more radical wing has been able to push its own man as top candidate. Week by week, facts about AfD candidates' and functionaries' involvement in extreme right-wing networks become public, however. In Nuremberg, Elena Roon, who will run for the national parliament, recently mailed a picture of Hitler via What's App with the slogan "Germany needs you".



SPAIN | Jimmy case: Nazi murder without conviction

FROM SANDRA CORTÉS FOR ANTIFEIXISTES.ORG IN MADRID

A SPANISH court has closed the case of the murder of football fan Francisco Javier Romero, aka "Jimmy", after failing to identify his killers. On November 30, 2014, a group of nazi hooligans from Atletico Madrid attacked anti-fascist supporters of Deportivo de la Coruña just before a match near the Vicente Calderón stadium in Madrid. The nazis used weapons, wounding several people and threw Jimmy and another person into the nearby Manzanares River. Jimmy was incapacitated by his injuries and drowned in the cold river. Police later arrested several people and four were jailed. After the withdrawal of a witness, who had received threats, however, the judge ordered the nazis' release.

The police investigation has not been able to identify Jimmy's attackers, resulting in Madrid Court 20's decision to file it as a case without known

perpetrators. Atletico Madrid nazis killed Aitor Zabaleta, a fan of the Basque side Real Sociedad, in 1998. In that case, only one person, Ricardo Guerra, was found guilty and sentenced to 17 years' jail, entering prison in 2000 and being paroled in 2006. In 2012, however, he was rearrested for smuggling hashish into the prison. His sentence for Zabaleta's murder ends this year.



FPÖ leadership in Moscow. From left to right: Harald Vilimsky (General Secretary), Heinz-Christian Strache, and Norbert Hofer (Third President of Austria's National Council and former presidential candidate). Photo: Twitter



AUSTRIA | Putin's FPÖ stooges

FROM MARTIN JORDAN IN VIENNA

FOR A DECADE, the far right Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) has been cuddling up to Vladimir Putin's United Russia Party and doing the Kremlin's bidding, something completely unthinkable under late former FPÖ leader, Jörg Haider.

Until 2008, the FPÖ saw itself as the political front line against "Bolshevism" and the "Red Danger from the East". However, this changed around 2008 in the wake of Russia's invasion of Georgia and the sudden death of Haider that led to the reunion of the far right under the current FPÖ leader, Heinz-Christian Strache. Without any recognisable domestic political relevance, the FPÖ began to



Members of SMR taking part in a demonstration on National Day in Stockholm. Photo Peter Isotalo

SWEDEN | Nazi terrorist suspects arrested

FROM DANIEL VERGARA FOR EXPO IN STOCKHOLM

THREE MEN WITH connections to the violent nazi Nordic Resistance Movement (NMR) movement are being held under suspicion of having bombed a left-wing premises and asylum-seekers' centres. All the bombings occurred in Gothenburg, one being detonated outside the left-wing Syndicalist Forum infoshop in the city centre last November. Another attack was launched at an asylum centre, also in the city. In that assault, one person was severely injured, losing his legs.

A third bomb, also at a refugee centre, failed to explode. Police have

said, however, that if it had done so the damage to people and property would have been serious. Security police leading the probe are saying little about detail or motives but the arrested trio have been involved as activists in the NMR and the prosecutor is investigating whether the charges can be expanded to include terrorism.

The NMR has not taken responsibility and neither have those arrested. The NMR, it should be noted, however, has written in its "activists' manual" that it has full respect for people taking up arms against "the system".

NORWAY | Police Security Service forgets Breivik

FROM TOR BACH IN OSLO

IN ITS THREAT assessment for 2017 the Norwegian Police Security Service (NPSS) correctly observed only slight growth in the extreme right scene in Norway.

It also quite correctly predicts a small continuation of growth while at the same time pointing out internal skirmishes, rapid shifts of leadership and abysmal levels of organisation as the main hindrances to any significant expansion in numbers and activities. The NPSS further "considers it unlikely that right-wing extremists will carry out a terrorist attack in Norway in 2017."

However, this same state organ seems ignorant of the fact that Norway has seen terrorist acts by the extreme right ever since the 1970s including several bombings, killings and arson attacks. In the introduction to the assessment, the police state: "So far, Norway has not suffered from violence and terrorism by Islamist groups or right-wing extremists in the same way as some other countries in Europe." While this is true concerning Islamist terror, many view with concern the fact that the NPSS does not appear even to count Anders Breivik's 22 July 2011 massacre as an act of terrorism.



Golden Dawn MEPs disrupted a parliamentary conference on violations of the rights of the Turkish and Macedonian minorities in Greece at the European Parliament in Brussels



defend Russian military interventions, as well as Putin's domestic and foreign policies.

Besides becoming a Kremlin mouthpiece in Western Europe and an "independent election observer" during the referendum to rubberstamp the annexation of the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea in 2014 and in Russian local elections, FPÖ officials show particular interest in establishing business ties and cooperation with Russian politicians. Likewise, other European far right parties like the Front National (FN) and Lega Nord (IT) are eagerly grubbing around for cash and support in Moscow.

This relationship building culminated in December 2016 when Putin's ruling United Russia Party signed a cooperation pact with the FPÖ to put the two parties' into a formal set-up, both committing to "educate the young generations in the spirit of patriotism and joy of work".

GREECE | Nazi MEP apologies to Martin Schulz

FROM PANAYOTE DIMITRAS FOR GREEK HELSINKI MONITOR IN ATHENS

NAZI GOLDEN DAWN MEP, Eleftherios Synadinos, who, on 2 March 2016, headed a group of GD fans that disrupted a parliamentary conference on violations of the rights of the Turkish and Macedonian minorities in Greece at the European Parliament (EP) in Brussels has apologised for his behaviour, according to a letter from EP President Martin Schulz to Greece's Turkish minority party DEB (Friendship, Equality and Peace Party).

It is probably the first time that it has been publicly announced that any leading Greek nazi has apologised for his actions even if it was only done to avoid EP sanctions. Schulz also wrote that the struggle for minority rights and the fight against racism will remain priorities after the end of

his EP term and asked has the DEB to continue to inform his successor of further developments about the Western Thrace Turkish Minority.

The DEB wrote to Schulz after five Golden Dawn MPs and their "assistants" disrupted, on 12 December 2016, a round table discussion – co-organised by DEB and Greek Helsinki Monitor at the Athens Journalists' Union – on "National Minorities in Greece and Recommendations from International Organisations," with insults and a threat to the life of DEB president, Mustafa Ali Cavus. Although the police had assured the organisers they would guarantee the security of the participants, there were no police officers at the event, strengthening suspicions of affinity between sections of the police and Golden Dawn.

■ For the latest international news visit <http://hopenothate.org.uk/news/world/> or scan the QR code right >>

■ Ten years of Wilders' Freedom Party? p56



CANADA | Canadians march against hate prejudices

FROM MARTIN THÉRIAULT

JUST WEEKS after the Islamophobic terror attack that killed five people and wounded twenty at a Quebec City mosque, the far right Canadian Coalition of Concerned Citizens (CCCC) launched an appeal for marches against *Sharia* law and globalisation. Anti-Muslims, racists and far right groups rapidly started organising but their plans were frustrated by the emergence of local anti-hate coalitions that mounted counter-demonstrations in more than 20 Canadian cities.

The far right marches generally failed to materialise. When they did, they were often outnumbered 10 to 1. In Winnipeg, 400 people gathered against racism, many from First Nations, while the far right had only 20 people, heavily protected by police. In Toronto, 400 people countered around 30 racists, including the loony Soldiers of Odin. In Hamilton, 300 people turned out to denounce around 20 members of PEGIDA. In Edmonton, 200 anti-fascists prompted the rapid exit of 20-25 far rightists. In Calgary, home turf of Blood&Honour, no fascists showed up.

It was in Quebec that the largest demonstrations and counter-rallies took place. In Montreal, 150 supporters of various far right groups (Wolfpack, Soldiers of Odin, PEGIDA) were confronted by 350 protesters. With their paramilitary gear – body cameras, wireless communication, medics etc. – the Wolfpack supporters provided the main contingent of the far right demo. Despite its claim to being non-violent and merely wanting freedom of expression, a video by Anti-Pegida Quebec showed members shouting at police officers: “Kill the bastards! Kill the rats!” referring to anti-fascists.



POLAND | Failed traveller Jacek Miedlar

FROM RAFAL PANKOWSKI FOR NEVER AGAIN ASSOCIATION IN WARSAW

FATHER JACEK MIEDLAR is in his late 20s and has only been active on the Polish far right for the last two or three years only but has made a name as a firebrand public speaker and a cult figure among the most extreme right-wing nationalists.

Now a household name in Poland, Miedlar made international headlines when he was prevented from entering Britain in February. Coincidentally, his inflammatory speeches had been the subject of analysis and debate at a packed Oxford University seminar by a NEVER AGAIN Association member on 21 February. Miedlar is the only antisemitic, anti-Muslim and homophobic hater to have been suspended as a priest by the Polish Catholic Church. Arguably, he is also a product of youth culture, hanging out with radicalised football hooligans and members of the revived National-Radical Camp (Oboz Narodowo-Radykalny, ONR), a fascist youth movement created, and banned, back in 1934. The ONR is active again and it has support among many young Poles.

An anti-Muslim Britain First rally in Telford on 25 February and a large Polish nationalist festival held in Slough on 26 February had to go ahead without him. Stopped by the UK's Border Force he informed his followers on social media: “I was detained by the Jewish secret services. (...) I was treated with contempt for praising Jesus Christ which they consider as racist. Their behaviour was pure Talmud.” His outburst was endorsed by several Polish-born right-wing activists in the UK and publicly supported by Polish MP, Robert Winnicki, leader of the Nationalist Movement (Ruch Narodowy, RN). Increasingly shunned as a lunatic by other far right leaders in Poland, Miedlar announced on 7 March he was going to establish his own nationalist organisation.



USA | Trump wastes no time after inheriting Obama's deportation machine

FROM THE CENTRE FOR NEW COMMUNITY IN CHICAGO

ON HIS CAMPAIGN trail, Donald Trump pledged to create a “deportation force” and use it against immigrant communities. Many media outlets at the time failed to cover the fact that such a force already existed and flourished under President Obama. More people were deported during Obama's tenure than under any previous president. Early signs suggest the Trump administration will build on that trend.

In his first month, Trump unilaterally expanded immigration enforcement

priorities sending scores of long-time residents and non-violent offenders into detention and/or deportation proceedings. Notable cases include a victim of domestic abuse detained outside a courthouse after she requested a protective order and a young activist detained after speaking at an immigrant rights press conference.

While some aspects of Trump's actions like the notorious travel ban have been stalled by the courts, other dangerous enforcement policies continue apace.

Trump has offered high-level government and advisory roles to many people with ties to racist groups, largely adopting their extreme recommendations. Together, they are committed to this immigration crackdown.

At federal state and local level, civil rights groups are pushing for legal aid and measures protecting immigrant communities from overzealous enforcement agents. This local, grassroots opposition is crucial and must continue.

Comment

Taking a stand against liars

By Nick Lowles

NIGEL FARAGE knows all too well that smears and lies take hold if repeated enough times.

After the Berlin Christmas market terror atrocity in December, he launched an attack on the husband of murdered MP Jo Cox for backing "extremism" with his support for HOPE not hate. He then went on to accuse us of pursuing "violent and undemocratic means".

Nothing could be further from the truth. HOPE not hate is an avowedly peaceful and anti-violent organisation that fights the politics of extremism by bringing communities together.

We immediately asked Farage to retract and apologise for his smears and lies. We warned him we would sue if he did not. All we asked him to do was say 'sorry'.

Farage has failed to do so. Instead, his supporters waded in. Arron Banks, the millionaire businessman who bankrolled UKIP and the Leave.EU campaign, took to Twitter to call us a "vile organisation". He outrageously claimed we had "organised a mass confrontation" against Farage.

Raheem Kassam, the British editor of the US far right website Breitbart, and Farage's former chief strategist, began crowdfunding to finance research on us. We have also received thousands of abusive and threatening tweets, Facebook posts, emails and phone calls.

This is how these people



operate. They attempt to vilify, abuse and bully their opponents into silence. Whether it is Farage in the UK or Donald Trump in the US, they think they can demonise their opponents without any thought for the damage it causes or the anger and hatred it incites in their supporters.

And this is why we have decided to start legal action against Nigel Farage, funded by 14,000 donations already.

We know that losing this case will not hurt Farage financially. After all, he is a millionaire former City stockbroker with a personal backer worth £100m and a billionaire cheerleader in the White House.

But we believe it's time to take a stand against liars who bully and attempt to shout down those who peacefully disagree with them.

So, this case is not about money for HOPE not hate.

This is about telling the truth. It's about saying "No More!" to Farage's fakery.

The truth is that Farage dislikes us because we have shone the spotlight on UKIP and played a part in stopping him getting elected in Thanet. He and other UKIP elected officials and party members responded by calling us names and abusing us.

We began targeting UKIP in 2013 as it started adopting a more anti-immigrant stance, specifically whipping up scare stories with claims that 29 million Bulgarians and Romanians would come to the UK. Events since have proved we were right to do so.

When we tried to meet UKIP's leaders to discuss the party's growing extremism, they failed to turn up to their own meeting. Not only that, the party's conference then passed a motion banning

any UKIP member from supporting HOPE not hate.

Over the next few years we exposed their racist and homophobic councillors, the strongly anti-Muslim views of some of its MEPs, as well as links to European far right parties, and highlighted the lies and exaggerations in its election leaflets.

Farage's slurs seek to undermine the reputation of HOPE not hate and the vital work we do in communities across Britain helping bridge cultural and religious divides, working extensively with local authorities, schools, the probation and prison services on issues surrounding the tackling of extremism.

And, as we are now entering a general election campaign, HOPE not hate is putting Nigel Farage, his supporters and UKIP on notice that we will not tolerate anyone trying to smear us with the violence tag any longer.

It is completely false and we will not allow Farage and his cronies to peddle this lie to the people of Britain.

This issue is far bigger than just the words Farage used against us. It is about the politics of hope and hate. As Edmund Burke wrote: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." So if you are horrified by the rise of the far right, whether that be right-wing populists or more traditional fascists, then we urge everyone to do what they can to support those, like ourselves, who want to protect communities from further division and hatred.

I hope you will support us in our actions.

Support HOPE not hate's legal action against Nigel Farage, go to the back page or visit www.hopenothate.org.uk

UKIP 2.0: The Pa

UKIP's largest financial donor and Leave.EU founder Arron Banks launches "UKIP 2.0", "The Patriotic Alliance" (PA), *David Lawrence* explains



Patriotic Alliance

On 14 March, UKIP's largest financial donor and Leave.EU founder Arron Banks announced he had left UKIP to focus on "UKIP 2.0". The following day "The Patriotic Alliance" (TPA) was called into existence by his sidekick, Leave.EU communications director Andy Wigmore.

The *Telegraph* disclosed in March that their campaign had aimed to field 100 "independent" candidates in the next general election to unseat Remain-supporting MPs in areas that voted predominantly for Leave in the EU Referendum.

HOPE not hate has been informed that ex-UKIP leader Nigel Farage will be a key figure in Banks and Wigmore's new movement and that the trio have waged a deliberate campaign to split UKIP and clear the ground for TPA. Central to their efforts was a concerted attempt to push UKIP's only MP, Douglas Carswell, out of the party, which paid off in late March when he duly quit.

The initial launch date of TPA – the day after the May 2017 elections – was calculated to capitalise on UKIP defections following its likely electoral wipeout.

However, the 8 June General Election called by Prime Minister Theresa May has put a spanner in their works. Following a period of uncertainty for Banks and Farage who have both



eventually decided not to stand for election, TPA's launch is poised for after the 8 June.

While in the coming months more details will emerge about the embryonic movement, both the campaigning record of Banks, Wigmore and Farage and the dubious influence of Trump's resurgent American right indicate cause for concern. The shifting landscape of British politics may offer Banks the opportunity to make significant inroads in the months and years to come.

TPA: Structure

Banks began talking about a new movement shortly after the June 2016 EU

Referendum, stating that he intended to give "a voice to the forgotten millions of English people" that feel ignored by the political establishment and to an "England rising" UKIP was too disorganised to exploit.

The *Telegraph* has since revealed that Banks and Wigmore had planned to achieve this by funding and organising independent candidates to stand against 103 MPs identified as "not fit for purpose" at the next general election. "We are going to attack them," Wigmore vowed.

Banks has cited partial inspiration for his new venture from the Italian Five Star Movement (M5S), which

has utilised direct democracy tactics to lead a populist revolt against established Italian politicians.

Leave.EU CEO Liz Bilney visited M5S during the summer and Banks has claimed that they have "been busy replicating their website and the Direct Democracy element of their campaign". By appearing to give members significant decision-making power, TPA can be presented as a grassroots movement.

Banks has reportedly received advice from Steve Hilton, David Cameron's millionaire former policy advisor and TPA is expected to use the Crowdpac funding operation launched by Hilton last summer to fund local

candidates. Wigmore said: "If someone wants to stand as a candidate we will help them and use Crowdpac to help them generate funds to do so."

TPA has also stated it will use local Facebook pages in constituencies to invite support for a campaign to unseat a local MP. During the EU referendum campaign, Leave.EU made heavy use of Cambridge Analytica (CA), a data analytics firm used by the Trump campaign that provided Leave.EU with sophisticated advice on how to target swing voters via Facebook.

Banks has bragged about how CA played a major role in influencing the Brexit campaign, recently publishing a photograph of himself and Wigmore "discussing strategy" in Mississippi, described by Banks as "the home of political AI" (AI = artificial intelligence). TPA can also be expected to make heavy use of sophisticated online targeting techniques.

Bannon and Mercer

A key to understanding TPA are the ever-deepening ties Banks, Wigmore and Farage have to Trump-supporting Republicans, not least Trump adviser Steve Bannon. Bannon, the "intellectual" centre of the Trump administration and key figure behind Trump's proposed Muslim ban, has spoken of supporting a "global tea party" of right-wing populist parties, like the Front National (FN) in France, geared towards overturning the political establishment and protecting "Judeo-Christian" values against Islam.

It was Bannon who arranged for Banks, Wigmore, Farage and Leave.EU's political strategist, Gerry Gunster, to meet Trump shortly after his election. Gunster was responsible for modelling Leave.EU's approach on Trump's emotional campaigning and open disdain for facts and also for the relentless

exploitation of the immigration issue.

Bannon held a three-hour meeting with Farage shortly before he was snapped dining with Trump in February. The stated intention of TPA – to "drain the swamp" of British politics – is a phrase lifted directly from Trump's campaign.

Another potential influence is hedge fund billionaire Robert Mercer who has poured millions into both Trump's campaign and Bannon's previous outlet, Breitbart News Network. Mercer also owns a \$10m stake in CA and sits on the board, as did, until recently, Bannon. According to Wigmore, Farage has been close to Mercer since 2012 and it was this friendship that enabled Leave.EU to acquire CA's services free of charge.

At this stage, any involvement by Mercer in TPA can only be speculated upon although his closeness to Farage and involvement in a wide variety of right-wing populist initiatives indicate he could be a key player in the emerging movement.

Calexit

The entwining of Farage, Banks and Wigmore with Trump's Republican allies was evidenced by the *Sunday Times*' report that Gunster and Scott Baugh, a Republican former member of California State Assembly, have hired Farage and Banks to lead a "Calexit" campaign to split the state of California.

Their aim is to divide America's most populous state into separate east and west states, the rural east being more likely to vote Republican than the "liberal coastal elites" on the west coast.

The repeated attempts of the Trump campaign to associate its success with Brexit have turned Farage into something of an idol for the resurgent American right and Wigmore, Farage and Banks spent much of March with Gunster attending fundraisers across California, reportedly helping to raise \$1m for the

push for a Calexit referendum during the 2018 US midterm elections.

"It would be portrayed as the Hollywood elites versus the people, breaking up the bad government," said Banks. "Seventy-eight per cent of people in California are unhappy with their government". Wigmore added: "Our role was to show them how to light a fire and win, to show them it's possible."

The Britons also met pro-Trump governors, Phil Bryant of Mississippi and Nathan Deal of Georgia. Wigmore and Banks were recently pictured "discussing strategy" with Bryant's right-hand man, John Barley Boykin. Whilst Bannon and Trump's exact role in Calexit is unknown, Banks told the *Sunday Times* that they hoped to rely on the support of the Trump White House for their campaign.

Stirring Division

"When it becomes clear that we're not going to get a clean Brexit, the anger will start to build again," Banks told the *Independent* earlier this month. During the EU Referendum, Leave.EU relentlessly attempted to link Brexit to fears around immigration. Therefore, when Wigmore states that TPA will "attack" the targeted Remain MPs, we can be confident that it will focus on that divisive issue in particular.

UKIP has long been mired in bitter factional fighting as a result of the struggle between Farage's hardline acolytes and UKIP moderates over the party's policy and messaging on immigration.

Banks and Farage's long campaign to eject UKIP's sole MP Douglas Carswell, a consistent critic of Farage's tactics, was the trigger for Banks' abandonment of the party. Free of the tempering influence of UKIP moderates, it seems likely TPA will relentlessly hammer the issue of immigration.

UKIP took steps to distance itself from the hard-line far right, refusing to work with the French FN. Farage,

however, has recently reversed this supposedly principled stance, conducting a long and friendly interview with FN leader Marine Le Pen for LBC radio.

Leave.EU has previously published propaganda that indicates support for both the FN and the Dutch counter-jihadist, anti-immigrant politician Geert Wilders' PVV, the constituent parts of Bannon's "global tea party".

Farage and Banks' responses to the 22 March terror attack were telling. Farage issued a seemingly endless string of inflammatory and discriminatory statements on American TV news outlets and Twitter. "We already have a problem with home-grown terrorism. Why on earth would you add to it by bringing people in?" Farage tweeted, a sentiment subsequently endorsed by former Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, David Duke. Farage even contrived to spin the tragedy to condemn opposition to Bannon's proposed Muslim ban.

Banks decided to take aim at "illegals" in the UK, despite the fact it emerged that the killer was British. Leave.EU released a statement via Banks' far right site, Westmonster.com, blaming Theresa May for allowing "a million illegal immigrants to infiltrate our great nation" and stating that "We are not winning this fight but, with proper, no-nonsense leadership, we will." This declaration positions TPA to be the voice that exploits such purported anger, offering a stark hint of what we can expect from the TPA.

Spanner in the Works

TPA's planned launch was derailed by the announcement of a snap General Election to be held 8 June 2017. Baulking at the prospect of organising 103 candidates at such short notice, Banks initially announced he would run himself in Clacton in a bid to unseat Carswell although chose not to do so under



Paul Nuttall out campaigning in Stoke. Photo: Twitter

a TPA banner. Banks even entered talks with UKIP about the prospect of standing for the party he had done so much to undermine in recent months.

However, Carswell quickly announced he would not be standing for re-election, leaving Banks to weakly withdraw himself several days later and announce his support for Jeff Bray, Clacton's potential UKIP candidate. TPA's launch has been postponed.

The End of UKIP?

Looking at the prospect of fighting both a local and general election, UKIP may be facing oblivion. The party is considerably diminished after the vicious campaign led by Banks and Farage against Carswell. Farage's abdication as leader has deprived the party of its top draw and Nuttall's failure in February's Stoke Central by-election has proved him to be a far from adequate replacement. Carswell's defection has deprived the party of its sole MP. UKIP is now widely seen as hopelessly disorganised at

both a local and national level.

Crucially, UKIP has lost multiple funders over the past year and was recently ordered to repay more than €172,000 by the European Parliament (EP) after an EP group led by UKIP was found to have mispent over €500,000 of European grant money on domestic political campaigns.

Without Banks' money and, ironically, destined to lose EU funding, the party will have scarce resources for any major election push.

Farage will understand the severity of UKIP's prospects better than most. However, he will also understand that publically turning on the party he helped build in the run up to a General Election would be seen as a huge betrayal by many of his supporters.

Farage has instead declined to stand for UKIP in June, with the weak excuse that he would have a bigger impact on Brexit in Strasbourg than Westminster.

Farage also took the opportunity to set Nuttall up for failure, stating on BBC

Radio 4 that Nuttall has "six weeks to prove himself hasn't he, it's just as simple as that."

Nuttall is desperately seeking to redefine his beleaguered party for the post-Brexit era and has resorted to a radically anti-Muslim platform. Nuttall's UKIP is now promoting a ban on the *burka*, a moratorium on new Islamic faith schools and a mandatory annual genital examination of girls deemed "from groups at high risk" of suffering female genital mutilation.

However Nuttall's attempts to salvage the party by framing it in opposition to Islam seem doomed to fail. Issues around Islam have faded from public focus in an election utterly dominated by Brexit. Such ugly policies are unlikely to gain traction in the Tory heartlands where UKIP were once strong and may even contribute to UKIP losing the former Conservative voters it had attracted through its Euroscepticism.

Banks and Wigmore were quick to criticise UKIP on these issues. Wigmore

tweeted: "Bad timing – this election not about banning the fucking burkha know [sic] one gives a toss even in north of England issue much more complicated". Banks later accused UKIP of waging "war on [the] Muslim religion".

The future of the party has never looked so jeopardised and it seems unlikely that the party will survive long as a major force in British politics. As planned, TPA appears ideally placed to capitalise on UKIP's haemorrhaging membership but after a general election rather than just a local one.

The Challenge Ahead

Little is certain in the currently turbulent waters of British politics. However, what we can expect is for TPA to capitalise cynically on the uncertainty and compromise that will accompany Brexit.

Following 8 June, Banks' movement could be poised to instigate real political upset in the UK, helping both to destroy UKIP and further extend the dubious influence of Trump's backers onto the continent.

UKIP and 2017 elections candidate report

THERE ARE 1,277 candidates from populist and far right parties standing in the county council, local, and mayoral elections taking place on 4 May.

This is a big drop of 658 candidates from the 1,935 overall standing in the same regions' last election cycle and reflects a significant decline in the willingness and ability of the far right to engage in democratic politics.

Perhaps most striking is the ongoing decline of the British National Party which has managed to field only 10 candidates in the county council elections, a slide from a record 744 in 2007.

In addition, the significant decline in UKIP's number of candidates is emblematic of its current crisis, having haemorrhaged leading figures, donors and members since its undoubted success in the EU Referendum.

This is the first electoral cycle in which UKIP councillors are up for re-election in large numbers, with 120 seats at stake. However, their prospects are not good with some estimates suggesting that the party could lose 80-90 of them.

Such is the feeling of gloom that there are many wards in which sitting UKIP councillors have decided not to put themselves forward for re-election. If UKIP achieves dire results in May, as is expected, it could be another nail in its coffin.

County Councils

- **2017:** 1031 (UKIP); 10 (BNP); 1 (British Democrats); 2 (British Resistance); 1 (English Democrats); 1 (National Front)
- **2013:** 1481 (UKIP); 93 (BNP); 3 (British Democrats); 1 (EPP) 2 (NEP); 37 (English Democratic Party); 3 (National Front); 1 (Patria)
- **Total** – 1,046 down from 1,621

Municipal Councils

- **2017:** 103 (UKIP)
- **Total from the last election cycle:** 230 (UKIP); 7 (BNP); 3 (English Democratic Party)
- **Total** – 103 down from 240

Scottish Councils

- **2017:** 39 (UKIP); 2 (National Front)
- **2012:** 37 (UKIP); 6 (National Front); 4 (Brittca)
- **Total** – 41 down from 47

Welsh Councils

- **2017:** 77 (UKIP)
- **2012:** 13 (UKIP); 2 (National Front); 2 (British National Party)
- **Total** – 77 up from 16

Mayoral Elections

- **2017:** 8 (UKIP); 2 (English Democrats)
- **2016:** 1 (UKIP); 1 (British National Party); 1 (Britain First)

(Note: The increase reflects the 2017 introduction of the new metropolitan mayors)

England by Region & Highest Concentration County/Ward

- **North West** – 61 (Lancashire)
- **East Midlands** – 194 (Lincolnshire)
- **West Midlands** – 83 (Worcestershire)
- **North Yorkshire** – 23 (North Yorkshire)
- **South East** – 315 (Kent)
- **East** – 236 (Essex)
- **South West** – 128 (Devon)

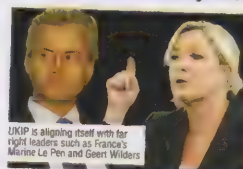
LET'S CALL TIME ON UKIP



Let's call time on UKIP

■ Irrelevant ■ Extremist

UKIP was set up to campaign for Britain to leave the European Union. It has achieved its sole goal, so what's its purpose now? Nothing, say many of its supporters. UKIP's only MP Douglas Carswell has left the party because he sees no need for it anymore.



UKIP's leaders now want to take the party further to the right, adopting even more hardline views on immigration and Muslims. UKIP openly aligns itself with extremist parties across Europe, like the fascist National Front in France and the Dutch anti-Muslim politician Geert Wilders.

UKIP is mired in financial scandal. The party has been found guilty of misusing £500,000 of taxpayer's money, as have eight of the party's MEPs.



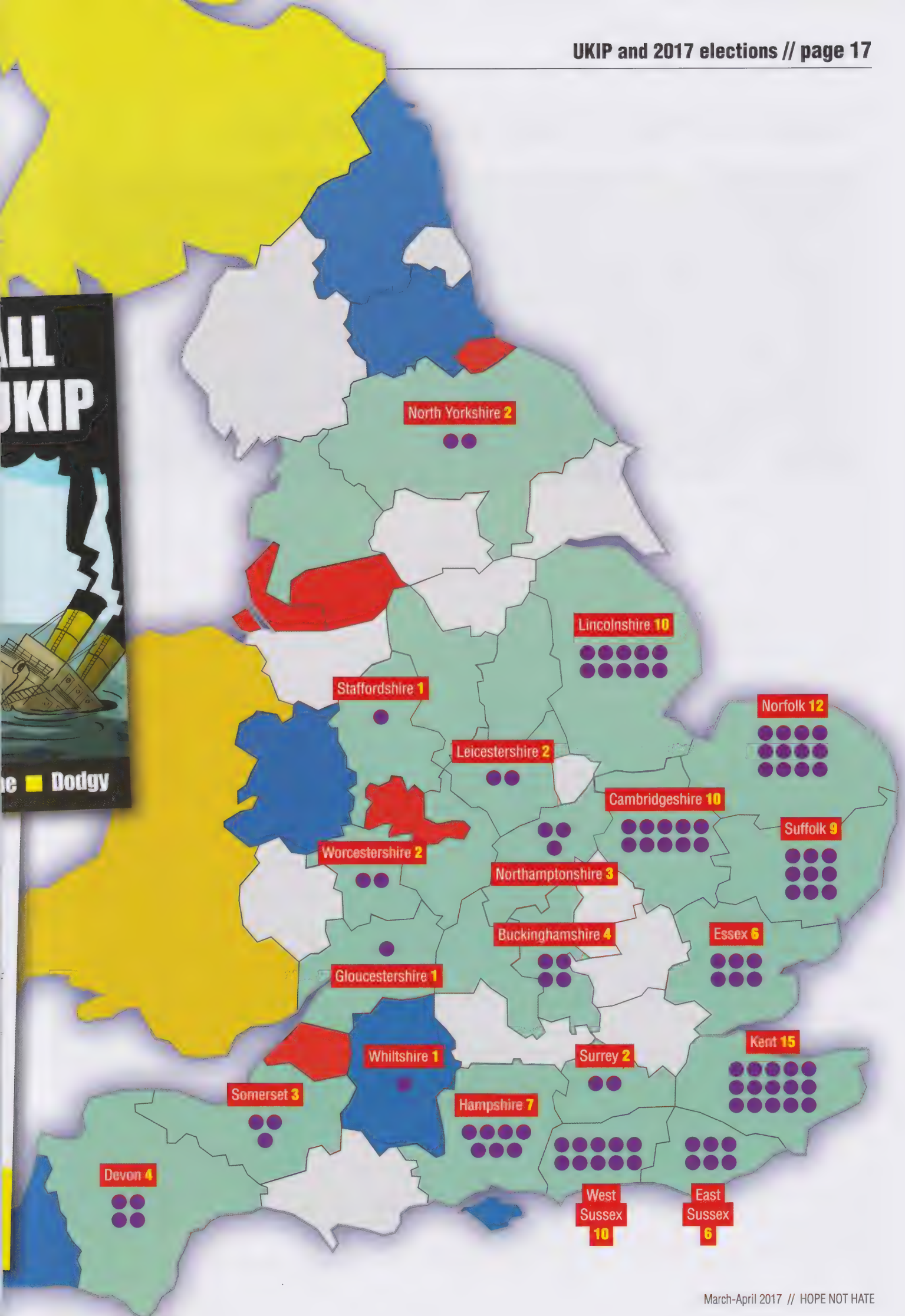
UKIP is today irrelevant, growing increasingly extreme and mired in dodgy financial scandals. Let's call time on UKIP on 4 May.



HOPE not hate exists to provide a positive antidote to the politics of hate. We combine first class research with community organising and grassroots actions to defeat hate groups and to build community resilience against extremism. For more information, visit:

www.hopenothate.org.uk

Printed and promoted by HOPE not hate Ltd, 20-22 Bedford Row, London WC1R 4ES



Make Le Pen's "first step", the last.



By Graeme Atkinson

MACRON WON. Le Pen lost. That was the interim verdict of French voters in yesterday's first round of the presidential elections.

With eleven candidates standing it was the centre-right Emmanuel Macron and the right-wing extremist Marine Le Pen that emerged as front-runners with 23.9% and 21.4% respectively.

Running each other close for third and fourth place – and thus disqualified from the second round – were conservative François Fillon with 19.9% and the left candidate Jean-Luc Mélenchon with 19.6%.

Benoît Hamon, the candidate of incumbent president François Hollande's Socialist Party, failed with a miserable 6.3%, a measure of the revulsion felt at Hollande's incompetent rule.

What remains now is for Macron to defeat and – hopefully – wipe out Le Pen in the second round. Already, Fillon, Hamon and Hollande have urged mainstream right and mainstream left voters to switch to Macron in round two.

Mélenchon has yet to recommend a vote but it is inconceivable that he will urge the seven million who voted for him to vote for Le Pen given that he was the only main candidate with a combative attitude towards her Front National, even labelling it "fascist".

The run-up to the second round on 7 May is going to be nothing short of eventful. Several things are likely.

Firstly, bereft of any possibility of forging a post-first round alliance with

any other party, Le Pen's hysterical approach to the campaign is likely to reach the screech level that began to characterise the last few days of her round one campaign.

Secondly, knowing that defeat is almost inevitable, the volcanic anger she has inherited from her fascist father will be unrestrained, the racist, authoritarian traits that she has fought so hard to conceal behind her façade of "mainstream moderation" will be on show and her language smoothly adjusted from "quasi-reasonable" to "extreme". The plastic smile will disappear and the gloves will be off. Then, it can get dangerous as her followers – many with views that propel violence – flood France with poison.

The manoeuvres and tricks have started all ready with Le Pen disgustingly labelling Macron a "weakling" and with her transparent stunt of trying to distance herself from her party that will be called upon to do all the legwork for her campaign in any case.

Thirdly, Le Pen will deepen the divisions brought to the surface by the first round. She won the north, most of the east and south east. Macron won the west and chunks of the east and south east. Rural France voted with Le Pen but urban France stood more or less solidly anti-Le Pen. In Paris, she got only 4.99%

From an anti-Le Pen viewpoint, the second round will be clean. The only tainted contestant will be Le Pen who is currently under investigation for paying party activists under the guise

of employing them as parliamentary assistants as a member of the European Parliament. Members of her staff are under formal investigation but Le Pen herself still has her MEP's immunity despite efforts by prosecutors to have it lifted.

No doubt Le Pen will work overtime to brand Macron as the candidate of the "establishment", "of globalisation", of "multicultural France" while she bogusly poses as the voice of those hit by poverty, unemployment and poor provision of public services who will "bring a different kind of politics to France"

Mme Le Pen, of course, knows a thing or two about these things, having been raised in such dire penury that her father could only lend her a humble €6 million for her campaign.

The choice political choice between Macron and Le Pen could not be starker. Macron, at least, least lives in the same time-continuum as the rest of us. Le Pen is still trapped in the 1940s and 1950s in the hope of restoring a France that no longer exists.

Ironically, it is Le Pen, the candidate of "authority", "order", "stability" and "security" who harks back to the most financially and politically unstable period in modern French history as some kind of Golden Age.

There is no place for Le Pen and her backwards-orientated ilk in a forward-looking Republican France. Hopefully, that same strongly Republican France will turn out in record numbers on 7 May to demonstrate that clearly and leave Le Pen behind. ●

Shopping for HOPE

HOPE not hate
t-shirts

HOPE
NOT HATE

HOPE
NOT HA

HOPE
NOT HATE

Where
there's
tea
there's
HOPE

Badges and
Stickers

★ **ANTI
FASCIST** ★

Don't be a mug!
£7 inc p&p

HOPE not hate
hoodie

HOPE not hate
Drawstring Bag

MoreIn Cmmn
t-shirts

HOPE not hate

#MoreInCommon

HOPE
not hate

shop.hopenothate.org.uk

Social Media Reacts to Westminster Attacks

Did the Far Right Speak for the British People asks *Ciaran Cummins*

BRITAIN WITNESSED a horrific terror attack on 22 March when Khalid Masood, 52, ploughed a hired car through pedestrians on Westminster Bridge before ramming the gates of the Houses of Parliament and stabbing a policeman to death.

Six people have died and a further were 40 injured, six of who remain in a critical condition. Among the dead was PC Keith Palmer, 48, a father with 15 years of police experience as well as Masood himself who was shot dead at the scene by an armed officer.

The purpose of such terrorist acts is to create division by instilling fear and

suspicion within the wider population. Several British far right figures and groups were quick to further stoke divisions on social media by venting their Islamophobia under the guise of speaking the truth and claiming to represent what the British public thinks.

Shockingly, the most mentioned Twitter user in the UK on the day of the attack was far right vlogger Paul Joseph Watson while the most viewed video on YouTube about the attack was produced by the Canadian anti-Muslim media outlet Rebel Media, featuring English Defence League founder Stephen Lennon (alias Tommy Robinson).

United or Divided? The Sentiments behind the Hashtags and Emojis

BBC News' Facebook coverage was viewed by 13 million people, shared 106,115 times, and reacted to over 157,000 times with, predominantly, Facebook's 'Angry' 'Sad' and 'Like' emoji symbols.

The *Daily Mail's* Facebook coverage was viewed 1.5 million times, shared 10,642 times and reacted to over 17,000 times with predominantly the three same sentiments.

Importantly, the combined expressions of sadness, approximately 62,400, outweighed all others, and expressions



Rebel Media video featuring Stephen Lennon (alias Tommy Robinson).

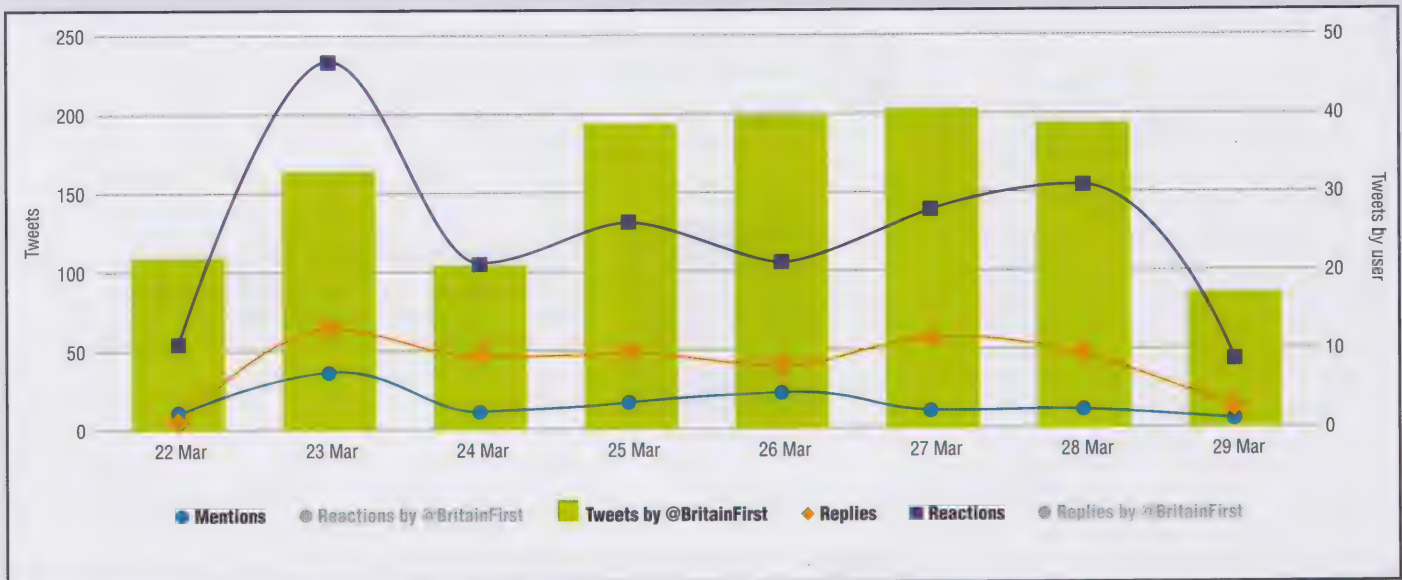


Fig.1 Britain First's Twitter activity following the attack

of anger – some of which indicated anger towards Islam and Muslims – were approximately 34,100. Of course, many of these expressions of anger will also have been directed at these subsequent prejudiced reactions.

Twitter's top five trending hashtags in the UK from Wednesday 22nd to Friday 24th were: #westminster, #london, #prayforlondon, #win, and #westandtogether. The positive or neutral sentiment of these hashtags suggests the aim of provoking popular division was not successful or, at least, not on social media. Also in the top twenty was #wearenotafraid and #notallmuslims (13th and 19th, respectively).

Conversely, anti-Islam hashtags popular with the far right saw little mileage during the same period. Those used were largely tweeted repeatedly by the same accounts and the majority in each instance were actually US Twitter users. These included: #banislam (49 users), #killallmuslims (4 users), and #islamistheproblem (27 users).

YouTube

Despite Watson's popularity, examining Twitter more broadly suggests the far right failed to make impact on the wider British public. The sentiments expressed on Facebook present a more divided response and a look at YouTube supports this.

The 10th most viewed video in the UK on the day of the attack (and the most viewed video relating to the events out of the top 50 trending videos) was from EDL co-founder and vehement critic of Islam, Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, alias Tommy Robinson.

Reporting from Westminster for *Rebel*

Media, Lennon lambasted both the mainstream media and the left for not blaming Islam.

At the time of writing, the video has been viewed over 1.2 million times, shared over 9,500 times and has received 21,590 likes compared to 2,906 dislikes.

The most viewed video in the UK the following day – James Corden emphasising the need to resist division on his US chat show – was viewed 988,000 times, had 1,131 shares and 20,876 likes compared to 1,246 dislikes at the time of writing.

The difference is partly due to the immediacy of Lennon's video following the attack compared with Corden's delayed response.

Furthermore, as public data on a video's audience demographics is unavailable, we cannot ascertain what percentage of viewers were based in the UK. It is worth noting, however, that *Rebel Media* is a Canadian venture with mainly North American hosts).

Lennon's videos most likely reached a large and loyal echo chamber. Its host channel, *Rebel Media*, programmes its content around individuals, all of whom approach their few topics from reliably alt-right and far right perspectives.

Like Lennon, many of *Rebel Media*'s regular broadcasters already had established audiences, for example, the co-founder and former editor of *Vice*, Gavin McInnes.

A Few Angry Voices? Filter Bubbles and the Far Right

"Filter bubbles" are the echo chambers we inhabit online, due to processes designed to show us content that is likely to align with our prior preferences.

Facebook's bubbles partly reflect

offline social circles given that its networks are built around our families, friends, and work colleagues. Furthermore, according to a 2016 study, Facebook is the second most representative social media platform of British society, which helps balance it politically.

Together, this means Facebook's algorithms are such that extremist content is only likely to appear on timelines if an individual, or a majority of those they interact with, already share (or, at least, follow) pages that hold similar views, thereby limiting the ease with which far right content can enter newsfeeds unsolicited.

Following the attacks, Britain's far right did not manage to sustain a large audience beyond its core. For example, Facebook posts relating to the event from Britain First (BF) demonstrated a surge and then a decline. A video from the 22 March was shared 15,084 times, another from the 23 March 506 times, and a video from the 24 March just 14 times.

Even the initial spike of interest did not lead to much, with only an estimated one hundred people attending BF's London parade on 1 April. This suggests those mildly sympathetic to, but less familiar with, far right views, were not entirely drawn in by any increase in their visibility.

It also highlights how ostensibly strong online engagement with a group (BF, after all, is the most 'liked' UK political party on Facebook) does not necessarily translate into active support.

As *Buzzfeed*'s Jim Waterson indicated in December last year, even despite its "likes", BF has relied heavily on paid promotion, as opposed to organic

sharing by its followers, of its anti-Islam videos.

Theoretically, the far right *should* be more successful on Twitter as connections are built more around shared interests. Yet, regardless of follower size, these groups have a small degree of actual interaction, making their influence on the broader public illusory.

BF has only 3,237 followers, and even with its increase in tweets following the attack, mentions, replies, and reactions to these dipped following an initial spike (see fig.1).

Even the British National Party, boasting 12,938 followers, had only 70 replies in total to its 9 tweets on the day of the attack.

Examination of how the public felt and who it was listening to after the Westminster attacks suggests the far right failed to gain a foothold beyond their loyal followers.

That these pockets of hate were dwarfed by background unity is especially surprising given that, post-Brexit, our ability to put aside differences and unite has been on ice.

Preaching to the Choir? Far Right Social Media Figureheads After the Attacks

Paul Joseph Watson

Paul Joseph Watson, editor-at-large for the US conspiracy and fake news sites *Infowars* and *PrisonPlanet*, was the most mentioned account on Twitter in the UK from Wednesday 22 to Friday 24 March. This was because of his followers' replies to his 249 tweets, replies, and reactions throughout the period.

Watson is part of a wave of figures posing as beacons of truth in contrast to the mainstream media on the basis that the latter expresses a liberal/left bias and so falls short of adequate journalistic scrutiny.

Unchecked media bias is a legitimate concern but Watson relies on this argument simply to promote various conspiracy theories on, for example, 9/11, Birtherism, and Hilary Clinton's health. Watson's anti-Islam views are clear with videos like "We Need Islam Control, Not Gun Control" and article headlines like "Paris Massacre: A Product of Muslim Ghettos".

Watson's dubious relationship with the truth and his own right-wing anti-Muslim bias were all-too-apparent following the attacks.

Watson's Twitter following, approximately 550,000, gives the impression that his is a voice that represents the British people. However, it should not be assumed that all these followers are listening to, or in agreement with, his views.



Paul Joseph Watson @PrisonPlanet · Mar 23

Hashtags WON'T stop Islamic terrorism.

Accepting that Islam is NOT a 'religion of peace' will.

[youtube.com/watch?v=iZgG0p...](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZgG0p...)

#PrayForLondon



The Truth About the London Terror Attack

The religion of peace strikes again. Facebook @

<https://www.facebook.com/paul.j.watson.71> FOLLOW

Paul Joseph Watson @ <https://twitter.com/PrisonPlanet>

youtube.com

4 12 13 14



Tommy Robinson @TRobinsonNewEra · 2h

No they want Islam to rule the world ,they want non Muslims subjugated,you would know this if you picked up their instruction manual #Koran

cory @Coryjones

tommy robinson n them dont realise they're reaction is exactly what extremists want. they don't care about other Muslims. they want division

4 12 13 14



Tommy Robinson @TRobinsonNewEra · 19h

How long until we are told the man had mental health issues. Those mental health issues are Islam

4 12 13 14



Arron Banks @Arron_banks · Mar 23

Being born in Britain doesn't matter a jot. We have a huge Islamic problem courtesy of mass immigration. Face facts

Louise Mensch @LouiseMensch

He was born in Britain Arron. It's got everything to do with Russia. Russia paying Swedes to riot. Russia killing their Ambassador in Turkey twitter.com/Arron_banks/st...

4 12 13 14



Arron Banks @Arron_banks · 14h

You are far right if you want sensible borders , you don't want London to be minority white city and you want to see integration !

howdy @clivepeter1234

@Arron_banks Sincere question: are you ok with being called 'far right'?

4 12 13 14



Fig. 2 Arron Banks' Twitter network

Moreover, it is noteworthy that Watson's most popular tweet explicitly mentioning Islam the day after the attack had only 9 replies – out of 384 – from users verifiably tagged in the UK. Nevertheless, it would be foolish to ignore the anti-mainstream media bubble Watson and others have deliberately carved out online, as it has a growing, loyal social media following.

Stephen Yaxley-Lennon alias Tommy Robinson

The same bias and disconnect with wider socially constructive sentiment in response to the attack ran through Lennon's anti-Islam Twitter tirades. Responding to a comment pointing out that he was giving terrorists what they want, Lennon further encouraged division with a crass generalisation about Islam:

Likewise, anticipating the generally plausible consideration that *one* cause of such attacks *can* be mental health issues, Lennon preferred to stick to his own myopic understanding of why Islamist terrorists carry out their vile deeds:

Lennon's large following –

approximately 188,000 – equally should not imply that his social media voice is representative of the nation's views, not least because Lennon receives, on average, just 330 retweets per tweet.

At the same time, given that his book *Enemy of the State* was an Amazon UK bestseller following the attack, there is evidently an appetite for his warped views.

Likewise, through increased work with *Rebel Media*, Lennon is clearly aiming to increase his resonance in the aforementioned anti-mainstream media bubble.

Arron Banks

Of equal concern is that those on the far right who are closest to mainstream politics were keen to perpetuate their biased understanding.

Leave.EU co-founder, former UKIP key donor, and founder of the forthcoming Patriotic Alliance political movement, Arron Banks, offered the following in the face of evidence undermining the link between this particular terrorist attack and mass migration:

Followers of Banks will not be

surprised at his disinterest in engaging in a constructive discussion that actually attends to the facts and others' political viewpoints.

A more recent tweet, for example, needlessly and unhelpfully focused on London's racial make-up when discussing attitudes to integration and migration:

Rather than opening up an important discussion about whether certain attitudes to migration and integration are inherently far right, Banks instead revealed, as one reply noted, what he felt about the non-white British.

Banks' views too are unlikely to be in touch with the public, as his Twitter interactions from the last year were predominately with his allies on the political and media margins, such as 'Patriotic Alliance' partner Nigel Farage, Breitbart London's Raheem Kassam, and his own anti-establishment political blog, Westmonster (see fig.2).

Like Watson and Lennon, though, Banks' connections illustrate a desire to use people's resentment at mainstream politics and the media so as to push his own views.

Westminster: the unity that followed the attacks

Nick Ryan reports

WITHIN HOURS of Khalid Masood speeding over Westminster Bridge and murdering a policeman at the gates of the Houses of Parliament, thousands of people took to Twitter using the hashtags #WeStandTogether and #WeAreNotAfraid to show their defiance.

Although there were inevitable calls for revenge and that “Islam is the problem” from the usual suspects, including former English Defence League leader Stephen Lennon (who headed to Westminster Bridge and the TV cameras to claim that: “The reality is these people are waging war on us. This has been going on for 1,400 years”) Muslims, as well as others, have shown great sympathy and solidarity with victims after the terrorist attack in Westminster.

The day after the attack, there was a candlelit vigil in Trafalgar Square led by London Mayor Sadiq Khan, the first Muslim to ever hold the post. “Those evil and twisted individuals who tried to destroy our shared way of life will never succeed and we condemn them,” Khan told the crowd.

“London is a great city full of amazing people from all backgrounds and when Londoners face adversity we always pull together. We stand up for our values and we show the world we are the greatest city in the world,” he said.

In Birmingham, hundreds of Muslims also staged a peace rally that weekend, representing some 200 different mosques. Several arrests had taken place in the city following revelations that Masood had lived there.

The rally was organised by prominent Muslim anti-war campaigner Salma Yaqoob and her husband Dr Waqar Azmi. There were also representatives of other faiths, including the Church of England Bishop of Birmingham David Urquhart and some of Britain's most prominent imams. Speakers took to the stage in front of a banner that read: “Not in our name – Muslims oppose Isis.”

Former Birmingham city councillor Yaqoob said: “Birmingham has been portrayed as the jihadi capital of Britain so today it's all about getting it across that it is not the case. What that man did was a vile act which is condemned by Muslims and is most definitely not in our name.”

Fundraising

Muslims in London also quickly raised more than £30,000 for victims of the Westminster terror attack, with over 1,000 well-wishers donating money to those hit by the atrocity.

The fundraising drive, called Muslims Unite for London, was set up by Muddassar Ahmed who was in Portcullis House across the road from Parliament at the time of the attack. A patron of the Faiths Forum for London and a former government advisor, Ahmed had been meeting an MP when Masood struck. He was one of hundreds who spent nearly five hours barricaded in the building as the police worked to secure the area.

The campaign, co-launched by Labour MPs Naz Shah and Yasmin Qureshi, declared: “British Muslim communities stand with all Britons and Londoners during these difficult times and are extending their support by raising funds to help with the immediate, short-term needs of the families of the victims. While no amount of money will bring back lives lost or take away the pain the victims and their families are going through, we hope to lessen their burden in some way.”

Ahmed said: “I did this not because I or other Muslims felt responsible for Wednesday's crime, or because anyone can put a price tag on human life. I did it because sometimes condemnation is not enough. Because actions speak louder than words.”

“We also know,” he added, “that ISIS hates our unity. They speak of destroying

the “grey zone” where people of different backgrounds live peacefully together. London, with its mayor, Sadiq Khan, is a prominent symbol of this.”

Muslims ‘Condemn’

Meanwhile, as the inevitable accusations that “this has something to do with Islam” abounded, a Muslim teenager in America revealed that, using Google Spreadsheets, she had put together a 712-page document chronicling all the times that Muslims have condemned terrorism and atrocities committed in the name of Islam. Heera Hashimi did so after a classmate repeated a favourite right-wing mantra: “Not all Muslims are terrorists, but all terrorists are Muslims.”

Muslims, notes Hashimi, are “held to a different standard than other minorities: 1.6 billion people are expected to apologise and condemn [terrorism] on behalf of a couple of dozen lunatics. It makes no sense.”

Women's March

As Big Ben chimed four times on Sunday afternoon 26 March, an unusual stillness fell over Westminster Bridge. Women – many of them wearing blue for peace – lined up along the bridge linking hands, and bowed their heads in silence.

Julie Siddiqi, a friend of HOPE not hate and former executive director of the Islamic Society of Britain, said: “I was one of the organisers, we set it up really quickly but the response has been amazing! I found it very moving. I could feel the energy as we held hands. It was organised in the most simple way but was really powerful. The whole bridge on our side of the road went silent as we stood for those five minutes. It was great to see women come together in this way...”

She continued: “The reaction of this country since Wednesday has been incredible. People have rejected hate and



division. It sends a positive message that we need to reach out more, not less."

"It was so quiet and impromptu; just for a moment everyone was still. It was very emotional," said the Rev Anna Macham, of St Philips, Camberwell. Macham decided to attend after being told about it by a Muslim friend. "I was so shocked by events this week and I wanted to stand alongside my Muslim sisters and show that what unites us is greater than what divides us."

Akeela Ahmed, another friend of HOPE not hate and activist and campaigner who helped organise the gathering, said the action was a step towards "reclaiming" the bridge from the act of terrorism. "It's important that we say terror will not defeat and divide us and pay respects to those that died," she

said. "Keith Palmer is a hero and we are marking our respect for him and all the emergency services who protect us."

Meanwhile, hundreds of Muslims throughout the UK carried out community activities, from litter picking to visiting hospitals and making food packages, to mark Sadaqa Day, which was first organised in 2015.

Bridge vigil

Muslims also joined with the Metropolitan Police on Wednesday 29th March to march across Westminster Bridge, led by Mustafa Field of the Faiths Forum for London.

Just before 2:40pm in London, police officers, doctors, and faith leaders marched across Westminster Bridge holding banners that read "love

for all, hatred for none". Field said he was heartened to see Jewish, Christian and Muslim groups come together for the event.

As the vigil reached Parliament, dozens of people laid flowers at the side of the bridge, including family members of those killed or injured.

Reverend Femi Cole-Njji runs a church in east London and said that it was important for all Londoners to support those affected. "We are standing in solidarity with families who have lost loved ones, but mostly to show the world that we are one irrespective of what faith we represent. We've come together to stand together with the families and to demonstrate serenity, which is just so important in our world today," she said. ●

Target So

George Soros. Photo: World Economic Forum



ros



Joe Mulhall and Nick Lowles on the Right's fixation with George Soros

On 4 April, Hungary's Parliament passed an amendment to a higher-education bill designed to force closure of the Central European University (CEU), a Budapest-based institution established in 1991 by the billionaire Hungarian-American philanthropist George Soros.

This draconian move has been driven by Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and his disdain for Soros – and his Open Society Foundation (OSF) – who he believes has been meddling in internal Hungarian affairs for far too long in pursuit of his liberal agenda.

Since the formation of the Open Society Foundation (OSF) in 1993, Soros has spent hundreds of millions of dollars in Hungary and other central European countries promoting democracy and defending minorities.

OSF's work has regularly brought it into conflict with Orbán's Government but this got worse after the refugee crisis in 2015 during which the Hungarian government took a hard-line approach, closing the borders and referring to migrants in the most derogatory terms.

The election of Donald Trump in the USA, combined with mounting political difficulties within Western Europe's democracies, have emboldened Orbán to move more assertively against Soros and the OSF.

For Orbán, Trump's victory was a "historic event . . . a big bang" that gives "the western world the chance to free itself from the captivity of ideologies, of political correctness".

In his annual State of the Nation speech, in early 2017, he set his sights firmly on Soros: "Large-bodied predators are swimming here in the waters. This is the trans-border empire of George Soros, with tons of money and international heavy artillery...It is causing trouble... they are trying secretly and with foreign money to influence Hungarian politics."

Orbán went on to predict that 2017 "would be about squeezing out the forces symbolised" by Soros. "One can feel it coming," he said, "that each country will trace the source of this money, the connections [between NGOs] and intelligence communities, and which NGOs represent which interests."

In the same speech, he repeated the bogus claim that Soros' organisations were working on bringing hundreds of thousands of migrants into Europe.

Szilard Nemeth, a vice president of Orbán's ruling Fidesz party, said the Hungarian Government would use all the tools at its disposal to "sweep out" NGOs funded by the Hungarian-born financier that "serve global capitalists and back political correctness over national governments."

Soros has become "Public Enemy Number One" for much of the far right on both sides of the Atlantic.

Ten years ago, the now-fired sex predator but then Fox News presenter Bill O'Reilly described Soros as "off-the-charts dangerous" and as "an extremist who wants open borders, a one-world foreign policy, legalized drugs, euthanasia, and on and on."

The notion that Soros is working to

build a one-world government is central to the right-wing attacks on him. At best, this is born of hostility towards globalisation and at worst (Soros is Jewish) it echoes the age-old antisemitic conspiracy theory of Jewish world power.

In recent years, conspiracy theorists and far right cranks have begun to claim that Soros is actually the shadowy figure behind the influx of refugees into Europe. This is a claim parroted by Orbán himself as well as Alex Jones of the fake news outlet *InfoWars* who went even further stating that “Soros is behind the Muslim takeover of the West”.

The influential American far right media platform Breitbart, along with its UK branch Breitbart London, also has a fixation (bordering on obsession) with Soros, publishing reams of hostile and conspiratorial articles about him and the groups he funds.

This constant barrage of attacks seems to have had wider effect with *Politico* reporting that anti-Soros feeling has begun to rise in numerous European nations, including Romania, Poland, Serbia, Bulgaria and Slovakia and that “perceived sympathy within the Trump administration for anti-Soros sentiments appears to have emboldened politicians throughout Central and Eastern Europe to intensify their assault on Soros-backed groups.

Breitbart has been quick to claim credit for the anti-Soros backlash with its Jerusalem bureau chief, Aaron Klein, smugly crowing about a *Reuters* article that claims European leaders have “drawn inspiration” from US media outlets like Breitbart.

In his piece Klein claims once more that Soros is “pushing open borders in Europe and worldwide, with a specific focus on the use of the migrant crisis to achieve policy aims”.

To justify such conspiratorial claims, Breitbart authors regularly insinuate that Soros himself is directly responsible for and, perhaps, even actively orchestrating the actions of the many hundreds of organisations worldwide that the OSF funds. “Soros-funded” or “Soros-backed” have become the prefixes of choice in their hatchet-job articles. He is painted by Breitbart as “The Puppet Master”, a label with sinister antisemitic overtones.

In January, the Stop Operation Soros organisation was launched in Macedonia

by Nikola Srbov, a columnist for the pro-government news outlet *Kurir*, to uncover “subversive” activities by NGOs linked to Soros.

“We’ve witnessed the takeover of the entire civil sector and its abuse and instrumentalisation to meet the goals of one political party. That is unacceptable and goes beyond the principles of civic organising,” Srbov declared at his group’s founding press conference.

“The Open Society Foundation, operating under the Soros umbrella, used its funding and personnel to support violent processes in Macedonia. It has monopolised the civil society sector, pushing outside any organisation which disagrees with the Soros ideology,” he added.

Setting up Stop Operation Soros with Srbov was Cvetin Cilimanov, editor-in-chief of the state-run MIA news agency. He accused the Open Society Foundation of collaborating with “foreign agents” to undermine Macedonia’s government.

Truth has never got in the way of right-wing anti-Soros stories. Last November, it was reported that the Russian government had issued an international arrest warrant for

George Soros, for the damage he had done to the Russian

economy during the 1990s. While the story turned out to be rubbish, it was widely spread on conservative and far right websites.

In fact, there are so many wild and untrue anti-Soros conspiracy stories that there is now a dedicated Wikipedia page listing them.

Here in the UK, it is former English Defence League leader Stephen Yaxley-Lennon (*aka* Tommy Robinson) who has been among those leading the anti-Soros charge.

In April last year, he absurdly and offensively (especially considering Soros is a Jew who survived the Nazi occupation of Hungary) tweeted: “George Soros is the new Hitler and he [has] declared a genocidal war against us”, and, in August, added, “George Soros has declared war on the world”.

In a similarly hyperbolic outburst, the British-based purveyor of conspiracies and fake news, Paul Joseph Watson, claimed that “George Soros is a financier of domestic terrorism” and called on Trump to “Arrest him, and confiscate his wealth”.

Those opposing Soros have begun to work cooperate and, on 19 March, a conference was organised by the Identitárius Egyetemisták Szövetsége, Identitesz (The Identitarian Student Union) and the Knights Templar International in Budapest Hungary, titled “Stop Operation Soros”.

The event, addressed by former BNP leader Nick Griffin – and attended by leading so-called alt-rightist Daniel Friberg among others – points to how, over a decade of inventing conspiracies, opposition to Soros and the OSF has begun to crystallise into a movement.

Put simply, the international far/right and increasingly authoritarian regimes such as Orbán’s in Hungary hate Soros so much because of a fundamental divergence in worldviews.

He has donated an estimated \$11bn to progressive causes such as LGBT rights, support for refugees and the defence of human rights.

In short, contrary to the objectives of the far right, many of the organisations and individuals that OSF funds seek to build more open and tolerant societies based on liberal and democratic values. Conspiracies aside, this is enough to draw the vitriolic ire of the international far right.



Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán
Photo: The Russian Presidential Press and Information Office

They can't silence a whole nation

MigSzol demo in Roeszke, April 15, 2017. Photo from facebook.com/migszolcsoport via Michael Trammer/24mmjournalism

Bernard Rorke

WHILE ALL AROUND the world political leaders use Easter Sunday to broadcast messages of peace and goodwill, Hungary's Viktor Orbán used the opportunity to issue a direct threat of violence against his fellow citizens, warning that the "palms of peaceful and upright Christian people are itching" to strike the tens of thousands who have taken to the streets to protest against his regime over the last couple of weeks.

This threat of violence came just a day after more than ten thousand, mainly young, people gathered in Budapest's Szabadság Tér (Freedom Square). The protest was organised by the "We will not remain silent!" Facebook group that urged people to bring whistles, rattles and drums and join with musicians and DJs to make noise "to show them they cannot silence an entire nation!"

Earlier the same day, about a hundred supporters of Migrant Solidarity (MigSzol) protested in the Hungarian border town of Röszke against the government's shameful treatment of asylum-seekers. The latest asylum bill, pushed through parliament in March, will allow authorities to detain all adult asylum-seekers on its territory, including families with children and unaccompanied children aged 14 to 18, in transit zones, without any way for them to challenge their detention. Human Rights Watch, which has documented violent abuse by police on the borders, described the measures that flout EU, human rights and refugee law, as "abusive, pointless and cruel".

In a bout of paranoid and almost comic exaggeration, the prime minister's domestic security adviser said that the demonstrators, who allegedly included "Serbians, Italians,



Germans and Spaniards", had been bussed in by a "Soros-funded organization," with intent "to dismantle the border, eliminate the defences and allow everyone into the territory of the European Union without restriction."

As the *Budapest Beacon* reported, the highlight of the evening demonstration in Szabadság Tér was the appearance on stage by activists Márton Gulyás and Gergő Varga. They had been arrested, tried and sentenced to 500 hours of public work for allegedly conspiring to "breach the peace" and "vandalise a landmark building" by attempting to throw bottles of paint at the office and residence of the President of Hungary.

Gulyás mocked those, from pro-government media outlets, who label him "*buzeráns*" (pejorative slang meaning "loser, homosexual, degenerate"). To huge applause, he declared that the government regards as *buzeráns* all the "nurses, doctors, teachers, academics, public workers, and every fellow citizen who thinks he wasn't born to steal in order to live." Gulyás told the crowd: "We need to start politicising in order to get back

what was always ours but which has been stripped from us."

This task is huge because Orbán's construction of a "bloodless dictatorship" has progressed to a stage where, to paraphrase the academic Tamás Gáspár Miklos, the state is in a condition of deliberately orchestrated chaos – the entire system of constitutional checks and balances beaten to shreds, "parliamentary procedure" little more than a pathetic, shabby stage-set and the system of passing laws "an untraversable pile of garbage" – that has left Orbán and his gang free for so long to concentrate power, unhindered by any effective public or formal monitoring or accountability.

The ongoing street protests have called time on this state of affairs in loud and raucous fashion. The government has been caught off-balance by the wave of very public revulsion at the attack on the Central European University and civil society organisations and by the widening agenda of popular discontent. This loss of bearings is evident from the absurd official responses, reminiscent of dictatorships past,

to the protests.

Orbán and his henchmen repeatedly accuse "the Soros international network" of funding "hundreds perhaps thousands of protestors", and its "agent organisations" of devising and managing the protests. And of course, in the paranoid Fidesz mind-set, these same agent organisations "have been continuously attacking the Hungarian government for two years for the purpose of disrupting the protection of the border and to force the free entrance of illegal immigrants."

Despite all the ranting about international conspiracies, what really scares these nativist authoritarians most is "the people". These "skin-deep populists" have been unnerved by the sight of tens of thousands of ordinary Hungarian citizens, young and old, from all walks of life, protesting on the streets, rejecting a politics of intimidation and bigotry and demonstrating to the regime that it "cannot silence a country".

With many more protests being planned, it is still too early to predict what will become of this Budapest spring. ●

Operation Stop Soros

HOPE not hate's *Matthew Collins* reports from inside a far right anti-Soros conference in Budapest

"MATTHEW COLLINS is a prick, he's an ex-traitor and he's scum." My colleague shifts uncomfortably in his seat. Surrounded by nazis while sitting in an upmarket Lebanese eatery in central Budapest on his birthday is not what he had imagined he would be doing 24 hours earlier. But, HOPE not hate's reporter is nothing if not upfront. "Oh Nick Griffin, do fuck off, *please*..." he mutters in a marked drawl.

I take my colleague's dismissive reply to Britain's one-time would-be führer as my cue, a sharp prompt, to speak up in my defence: "Not 'ex', Nicholas, as far as you're concerned, it's permanent."

Griffin laughs. The former leader of the British National Party (BNP) sweeps past us, his long woollen coat slapping me in the face as he finds a table big enough for him and his menacing new friends.

The door sweeps open again, and in marches Jim Dowson, Griffin's reacquainted friend and a man I first met in Belfast in 2015, when he promised he was leaving Britain First, the alternative he founded in 2011 to Griffin's BNP.

"There's a terrible stench of snowflake in here", announces Dowson, pointing his squinting piggy eyes and jutting face at our table. My colleague responds abrasively to Dowson in Magyar. Unable to speak the language of his newly adopted country,

Dowson thinks it is an invitation to join us.

The object of the conference is to bring together a band of failed European extremists to besmirch the work and reputation of Hungarian-born entrepreneur and philanthropist George Soros.

As we follow Nick Griffin into the dark and stone cold building and up a steep staircase, two uniformed men appear at our side. We slow down and they, too, slow down. We speed up, and they too speed up.

Hanging at the back of the stage is a huge, clearly freshly printed banner screaming "Stop Soros". It said all we needed to know about the event.

Serious-looking young men flank the walls, holding flags. Our path is blocked from entering the conference until we have registered at a small table that looks hastily arranged.

"Identification!" barks a young man at me. I produce my NUJ card. My colleague produces what looks like (and is) a supermarket coupon. The young man stands bolt upright; "Soros people. The liberal left are here."

He dramatically clears his throat and our minders click their heels. "The liberal left media is here, these two men are with the liberal left media," he shouts.

Behind us, Nick Griffin is giving an interview to a television crew. He's praising



exposed



Nick Griffin launches a rabidly anti-semitic attack on George Soros, translated by Imre Téglásy

Russian society for banning Soros NGOs and promising he will move to Hungary very soon.

Around 100 people are in the main room settling in to loud and booming classical music. The makeup of the room resembles an old BNP meeting: hard men with shaven heads, broken individuals, posh and rather flirty middle-aged ladies with European frocks, bespectacled conspiracy types and a overall mood of bitter hatred .

In the Hungarian far right, there are no hidden code words for those whom this mob does not like. Even the old BNP had to surrender to some political correctness or face the courts.

Also different to the BNP, there was no air of putting on a show. There were no signs of "tourists" seeing what all the fuss is about. It's a public building, teeming with hatred and advertised widely across Budapest.

We are shoved to the very back and into a corner. Uniformed men plonk themselves down in front and beside us. Our photograph is taken by a number of people waving cameras in front of our faces.

A Russian film crew is shepherded to stand in front of us while a small scattering of media, considered more congenial perhaps, roams around unmolested.

Every time I try to take a photograph someone



Clockwise: Griffin, (unknown), Friberg, Melissa Mészáros, Jim Dowson, Matt Forney

manages block me. In the end, I just stand up and sit down at random intervals to test my knees and their dedication. Eventually I'm shot a look to desist.

Nick Griffin, now vice president of the soon-to-be-defunded European parliamentary group Alliance for Peace and Freedom (APF), opens the conference.

Life in the wilderness has not blunted Griffin's antisemitism. If anything, Hungary has sharpened his love of anti-Jewish conspiracy theory. "What Liberals would like to describe as a conspiracy theory, is actually backed up fact. Let me take you through some key facts about George Soros." Griffin derides Soros, a Hungarian Jew. Soros is a "dirty old man", an abortionist, who is funding the destruction of Hungarian society in league with international Jewry.

Soros is, according to Griffin, "using his billions to fund a massive campaign to promote subversion and perversion across the planet or rather those parts of the planet traditionally inhabited by people like us. But at a certain level Soros is a sort of pantomime villain. I think we are supposed to notice Soros, we are supposed to hate Soros, we are tempted by extension to see a deliberate

plan to replace us in our own homelands as a huge Jewish plot, and, yes, there is an element of racist Judeo-supremacism and ancestral hatred of Christians in what is going on."

The conference had been organised by the Hungarian Identitesz movement, a tiny group of mainly student lawyers. It was its chairman and founder, Balázs László, who spoke next, calling on everyone to defend their civilisation from "hostile globalists" like Soros.

Representing the Macedonian Stop Operation Soros group was Ljupcho Zlatev who railed against the influence of Soros and called on others to do the same. He explained how Soros' organisations had deliberately sought to undermine Macedonian identity and had even persuaded the previous Government to change the national flag in return for financial contributions.

Another speaker was Incze Béla, vice president of Hatvannégy Vármegye Ifjúsági Mozgalom (64 Counties Youth Movement), a group that is little more than a nazi terrorist organisation that plots outrages and subversion in countries the organisation feels have stolen land from Hungary: Serbia, Romania and Croatia.

The movement was formerly led by László Toroczkai, the controversial mayor of a rural Hungarian village who, as well as occasionally leading violent forays into Serbia, has tried unsuccessfully to place a ban on gays and Muslims in his town.

Imre Téglásy, from the Hungarian anti-abortion organisation Alfa Szövetség, talked about Planned Parenthood and Soros' funding of various "pro-choice" initiatives across Europe and the US. Téglásy was a guest speaker at the Britain First national conference in November 2015.

Angelo Baletta, vice-president of convicted Italian terrorist Roberto Fiore's fascist gang Forza Nuova, delivered the penultimate speech, claiming that Soros was funding the "gay lobby", "refugee welcome organisations" and "pro-abortion" initiatives in Italy.

Top of the bill was Barnabás Ábrahám from Identitesz who appeared to suggest that funding Soros had provided had resulted in the feminisation of society.

One person in attendance, though not speaking, was Daniel Friberg, the Swedish alt-right publisher HOPE not hate recently exposed as behind an attempt at a transatlantic alt-right

movement bringing together Arktos Media, Real Ice and the American National Policy Institute.

While Friberg did not speak, he wrote a glowing report of the event on his website: "When my friends and I arrived the first thing that struck us was how disciplined and well-organised the conference was. Everyone was impeccably dressed and, at the entrance, two Identitesz members were posted on each side of the door, holding up their organisation's flag with military-like discipline. Another thing that struck me was the beautiful historical building housing the event."

"Globalism is a disease, and conferences like these are part of a much-needed remedy," he concluded.

However, despite all the bravado, *faux* choreography and musclebound security guards, it is unclear whether anything will actually come out of this event.

While it appeared at the beginning of the day that the Hungarians were going to set up an organisation similar to the Stop Operation Soros campaign in Macedonia, the event turned out to be little more than a bunch of extremist failures largely representing only themselves and disgorging their antisemitic bile.

Budapest: The centre of a new rebellion

FOR THE PAST two years HOPE not hate has warned that the Hungarian capital is becoming a new home to right-wing extremists from around the globe.

Former BNP leader Nick Griffin and Britain First founder Jim Dowson will be the best known, to *HOPE not hate* readers, of the foreign extremist residents in Budapest but they are not alone.

Hungary's emergence as the bolthole of choice was first raised by HOPE not hate in 2015 after Dowson told an infamous far right conference in St Petersburg that he was fleeing "persecution" in Northern Ireland. Of course, the reality was that he was also escaping diminishing political returns, ridicule and potential imprisonment as a result of his entanglement with his hastily aborted Britain First.

The arrival of Western far rightists in Hungary has been hastened by a government that will accept their sinister political currency and stomach Western disapproval in sharp contrast to its refusal to accept asylum seekers and those genuinely seeking refuge at its borders.

The far more tolerant political atmosphere in Hungary is contrasted with Western Europe and the generally held belief that a combination of demographics and the size of Muslim communities makes the situation in Western Europe irreversible.

For the likes of Dowson and Griffin, there is little reason to be fighting elections any longer and building new parties to challenge the "destruction" of their homelands. Those battles were lost.

Western Europe, its democracies, NGOs and its European Union represent a cultural and social setup that they readily admit has destroyed their lives and political opportunities. The emergence of populism and short-lived 'Counter-Jihadism' only further



Viktor Orbán
Photo: Európai Bizottság
/Végtel Dániel

isolated them and their radical ideas.

In a pugnacious interview that Griffin would later give (skillfully refereed by a man from the *Daily Telegraph*), he lamented that the wider right's tight embrace of economic and fiscal conservatism (which manifested itself in Britain in the United Kingdom Independent Party – UKIP) had been his political death knell. So too, physically, was the rise of the English Defence League (EDL) that he describes (and its founder Stephen Yaxley-Lennon) as "moronic."

The defeat of Geert Wilders in the Dutch elections was no body blow to Griffin either. He merely went onto Twitter to exhort defeated Dutch racists – and those elsewhere who clung to hope on the result – to abandon Western Europe entirely. "Head for Hungary, Poland, Serbia, Belarus and Slovakia," he advised.

For Griffin and his German, Swedish, French and Italian friends now beginning to be denizens of Hungary, the "fight" there is far from over. Between them – hardened nationalists who embrace an idea of Europeanism almost alien in the cities from which they fled – they believe that in Hungary they can forge and enforce a culture that is white, illiberal, impenetrable and Christian.

"Marxists will have to flee, too," Griffin muses, in an interview he gave HOPE not hate in Budapest. "Their politics and their place on the spectrum have been superseded by single interest groups. They have been forced to abandon class politics for 'binary' issues." His face contorted as he said it.

There will be no place, either, for the so-called alt-right. The alt-right's cold and hardened conservative intellectualism and almost "cosmopolitan" behaviour is anathema to the austere fascist radicalism a young Nick Griffin and his cohorts tried and failed to fashion in the 1980s.

Dowson, whose money and enterprising nature has set this whole Hungarian wheel in motion, maintains, however, that he would still rather have a Conservative Muslim for a neighbour than a homosexual or "an abortionist."

Hungary's Prime minister, Viktor Orbán, cheered on by the likes of Breitbart and Donald Trump for his "populist rebellion against globalism and the élites", is an, as yet, undetermined friend or foe to the fascists.

But the political, social and economic conditions must mean something to them. Even the alt-right, with whom the likes of Griffin and Dowson share rumpled social and ideological bedding, are also looking for an Hungarian hideout.

For 2017, Orbán and his governing party Fidesz have promised more "rebellion" against what Orbán calls "multilateralism" in Western Europe. This will include continued suffocation of free speech, further harsh treatment of refugees and minorities as well as an all-out assault on any semblance or remnants of liberal, civil, democratic society.

It is this that has placed Hungary, front and centre, as the latest repository for the forlorn hopes and dreams of the far right.

Far right homeland

A growing number of far right leaders and activists are now basing themselves in the Hungarian capital, Budapest. Situated at the crossroads of Europe, Victor Orbán's right-wing rule provides the far right with a political security not found in most other European countries.

Here, HOPE not hate profiles the far right leaders currently hiding out in Budapest.



Nick Griffin

The ex-leader of the British National Party (BNP) has spent the three years since being dumped as an MEP scrabbling around Europe and the Middle East in search of a living.

Currently vice president of the Alliance for Peace and Freedom (APF), Griffin will soon be unsalaried again as the European Parliament is about to slash its funding.

Life in the political wilderness has done nothing to dampen Griffin's enthusiasm for antisemitism and conspiracy theory. Now aged fifty-eight, Griffin has almost completely turned his back on the UK and spends much of his time extolling the virtues of life outside the European Union, encouraging, where possible, his supporters to follow his example and move to either Central or Eastern Europe.

Griffin's pet project and favoured meal ticket is speaking – with a deformed understanding – on demographics, in his case scare stories about the demographic changes happening with the EU. "Britain is lost, is finished," he is fond of saying.

Despite being a minor political figure in the UK, Griffin is treated with reverence by some sections of the European far right and, although Hungary looks his best bet for a new home, he is also popular with fascists in Serbia where he is believed to have looked at rural properties.

Jim Dowson

Accumulating infamy and influence in both Europe and the United States, it is Dowson who has opened the door to members of the far right in Hungary by attaching himself to churches there.

Dowson runs a number of Internet operations in Budapest and Belgrade. His pervasive influence and the role he may have played in the Presidential elections have even been questioned in the US.

The former BNP fundraiser and founder of Britain First is heavily involved in plotting an exodus of hate-filled "Christians" from around the world to settle in the Hungarian countryside and build a new society free from liberalism, homosexuality and abortion.

Dowson has vowed to throw his considerable online operation behind a vote for Scottish independence in the belief that it will hasten the destruction of Britain and lead to an exodus of Christians to Central and Eastern Europe under the austere leadership of God-fearing characters like himself.

Tor Westman

Westman is the marketing chief for Arktos Books.

Westman formerly worked as a web designer and sits on the board of directors of Altright Incorporated, also working as its technical director. Westman was involved in organising the Identitarian Ideas IX conference in Stockholm on 25 February 2017.

Born in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1988, Westman currently resides in Budapest.

Group Suavelos

Suavelos is an internet project seemingly owned by Daniel Conversano – a "Billy no mates" internet fascist – who has desperately sought links with extremist groups in France, not least with the fascist French Nationalist Party (PNF), the Jew-baiting "comedian" Dieudonné whose virulent antisemitism he shares and Alain Soral with whom he had punch-up – and lost – during a televised debate. Both Suavelos and Conversano are held in very low esteem and regarded as cranks by most of the French far right. Conversano is believed to be living in Hungary.

Daniel Friberg

Originally from Sweden and CEO of a mining company called Wiking Mineral, Friberg is a leading alt-right activist and a founding member of the far right Swedish metapolitical "think-tank" Motpol. He is also a founder and now CEO of the influential far right European publisher Arktos Media Ltd through which he has published his book *The Real Right Returns: A Handbook For the True Opposition* (2015).

Friberg was also central to the creation of Altright Incorporated, a joint venture between Arktos, the American-based NPI and the media platform Red Ice. As well as being on the board of directors he is the new organisation's European Editor.

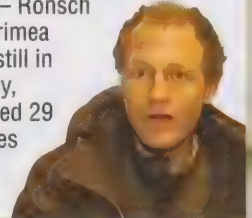


Willem Nassau

Probably using a pseudonym, "Willem Nassau" is a self-styled "French royalist" and "white supremacist" with a risible Twitter following that numbers a mammoth eight. He makes very nasty YouTube video clips that exhibit a strange fixation and extraordinary fascination with paedophilia and with accusing others – including the billionaire Hungarian-American and philanthropist George Soros – of it. "Nassau" claims to be living in Budapest.

Mario Rönch

Rönch, 33, is an anti-immigrant activist from Erfurt, eastern Germany, who stood behind the closed-down Anonymous. Kollektiv Facebook page and the vanished Migrantenschreck.ru website that spread fake anti-migrant news and who hawked illegal firearms from a Budapest-registered address. Sacked by the German far right news outlet *Compact* for being too extreme – and now on the run from the German police – Rönch is purportedly in Crimea but believed to be still in Hungary. In January, German police raided 29 homes and premises and recovered 40 guns sold by him.



Matthew Forney

Forney is an alt-right blogger and radio host associated with the "manosphere", an online anti-feminist male subculture site that emphasises male victimhood.

Forney has written for a number of alt-right and right-wing publications including *Taki's Magazine*, *Alternative Right*, *Return of Kings*, *Right On* and *The Right Stuff*. Forney was also the editor at the now-defunct manosphere gaming blog *Reaxxion*.

Forney founded his website mattforney.com in April 2012, which has become his primary outlet for articles such as "The Case Against Female Self-Esteem". He also hosts an active YouTube page, although his viewership remains small.

Forney ran the online magazine *Mala Fide* from 2009 to 2012, compiling over 60 blog posts into a book entitled *Three Years of Hate*. He has also authored books such as *Trolling for a Living* and *Do the Philippines*, which offers, among other things, "a thorough analysis of Philippine culture, to better help you bang girls".

Forney spoke at the Ideas IX conference in Stockholm, 25 February 2017.

He was raised in Syracuse, New York, and graduated from the private prep school, the Christian Brothers Academy, before training in English and journalism at SUNY in Albany. Forney now lives in Budapest.

Paul Ramsey

Using the screen name Ramzpaul, Paul Ramsey is an American white nationalist content creator currently based in Hungary. Formerly a Republican, he has been producing hate-filled videos since 2009 and currently has over 40,000 subscribers on YouTube. While he styles himself as a satirist and tries to couch his content in humour, it is regularly racist and misogynist. In October 2015 he tweeted: "If I were the EU president I would appoint Breivik as head of the refugee commission. We need some creative solutions."

He has extensive links within the so-called alt-right and international far right and, in 2016, he attended the National Policy Institute "Identity Politics" conference and spoke on the rise of the alt-right. In 2017 he attended the EtnoFutur conference in Estonia that was organised by the Conservative People's Party of Estonia (EKRE) and its youth wing "Blue Awakening" (Sinine Äratust) and the international alt-right conference Identitarian Ideas IX in Stockholm, Sweden.

National Action goes to camp with shiny new flags

National Action (NA), the nazi “youth” group that, in December 2016, became the first far right group to be banned post-war, has not gone away and has no plans to do so writes *Matthew Collins*

A TWO-MONTH special investigation by HOPE not hate and a joint investigation with ITN's Special Investigation team, uncovered evidence that the group is not only planning to relaunch as an ideological umbrella group for its former supporters but is still recruiting and training, confident it can get around Home Secretary Amber Rudd's proscription by following the dubious example of Islamist groups linked to Anjem Choudary's Al-Muhajiroun network

NA's leader, mouthpiece and motivator, Ben Raymond, has openly boasted that the banning order would not be a barrier to NA continuing its provocative activities.

With the help of HOPE not hate's research team, ITN broadcast a series of special news reports on ITV in mid-March that probed and exposed the activities of the group and those in its wider circle.

This included helping ITN infiltrate the secret “Legion” training and martial arts camp that has become synonymous with NA's preparations for violence and is linked to Larry Nunn, the far right “Mr Fix-it” and self-appointed benevolent despot of the floundering “movement”. Payment for attending the camp was even made to “Larry Nunn Enterprises.”

The investigation came at a time when two NA members were already facing court sentences, one for building a pipe bomb while up to another five members of the group were facing serious charges of violent disorder and inciting racial hatred and another three are still

expecting to be charged with aiding a junior member in building a pipe bomb.

Three members and associates of the group have since been committed to trial this October for their part in violent disturbances at an NA rally in Liverpool in March last year. Lawrence Burns, a leading member of the group from Cambridge, was also jailed for four years in March for a series of social media posts and public pronouncements mainly aimed at inciting hatred towards the Jewish community.

More disturbingly, deleted items recovered by police from Burns's mobile phone gave a chilling insight into his genocidal fantasies. He was defended in court, by the well-known and longstanding far right barrister and associate of Nunn, Adrian Davies.

Raymond has been plotting and planning a new group ever since being outlawed was raised after the murder of Labour MP Jo Cox in June of last year. At the time of Cox's murder, NA was considered to be “upping the ante,” something obvious in their outbursts and frequently pronounced lust for violence. Indeed, as Garron Helm, NA's fallen hero, commented to the undercover reporter, members of the group were excited about violence even if they had little success at it.

At the beginning of 2016, Raymond promised his group would bring a “reign of terror” to the UK and, although there is nothing to suggest Cox's murder was in anyway linked to the group, it was NA's behaviour both in the lead-up to it and, most disturbingly, in how the group

showed great approval of such actions that made a proscription an inevitability.

By the time Raymond declared NA had complied with the banning order on 12 December last year he was already planning a new group.

In part this was made easier because much of the group's hard core had grown frustrated and distant from him.

HOPE not hate had been aware of a growing schism in the organisation since last September. Ostensibly, this was a result of Raymond pushing the group further and further in a direction that looked like a path towards terrorism, but at the same time his persona was becoming more and more detached from political reality.

Raymond has often protested that NA was merely an “art project” with radical, cutting edge design and humour. Others in the group believed they were there to engage in further and more extreme violence as they believed Raymond was dictating but, interestingly, continually withdrawing from and excusing himself.

In the New Year of 2017, Raymond took to YouTube and a series of nazi websites to give mixed messages to both supporters and researchers about both his future plans and, not for the first time, his mental health. A small number of trusted NA members and enthusiasts were dispatched around the country with messages, instructions and queries about the direction or future next steps of the group.

It was during one of those secret “missions” that HOPE not hate encountered one of Raymond's



NATIONALIST REVOLUTION



NATIONAL SOCIALIST NETWORK
NS-NETWORK.INFO

Raymond was planning to launch a 'National Socialist Network'

messengers and his plans fell into our laps.

Raymond had opened a series of discussions with members of the almost comical 'New British Union' (NBU) a "Hollywood Nazi" far right gang with a minute membership but also a shared fixation with uniforms, badges and waving flags.

With NA members facing courts and prison, Raymond was planning overseas junkets to visit nazi groups in Europe and cement his position as (still) the leader of the UK's "Autonomous" and "Identitaire" movement. He entrusted supporters in Scotland, including the NBU's ageing Alexander Agnew, with the launching of a new version of the "youth group" in Scotland.

Raymond was planning to launch a 'National Socialist Network' with the same views and similar "cutting edge" designs and humour as the banned NA. The first group to form and fall under this umbrella was to be "Scottish Dawn" a collection of National Front (NF), Scottish Defence League (SDL) and New British Union (NBU) rejects and misfits.

In mid-January, we were given access by one of Raymond's former inner circle to an online folder containing thousands of sick and disturbing images that Raymond had collected.

We monitored the file as Raymond added more and more pictures, memes and designs, many of them creations of his evidently disturbed mind, frequently depicting acts of sexual violence against political opponents.

Later that month, Raymond registered

a domain name for 'National Socialist Network' with his details hidden behind a Panamanian front company that specialises in concealing such details.

Raymond also added new flag designs for the Scottish group in his secret files and despite relative and deliberate silence online from former NA members, we were directed to online chatter that seemed to confirm the group was up and running again.

In early March, Raymond added to his files a series of designs he made for two protests in Scotland. One was an anti-refugee protest along with the North East Infidels (from Sunderland) the NE, SDL and NBU on the 11 March in Alloa. The other was the now annual "White Pride" shuffle and demonstration that moves around the UK, having formerly been held in Manchester and Swansea and, this year, held on 23 March in Edinburgh.

This annual event is where NA had previously made dramatic, show-stopping entrances.

While this was ongoing, ITN secured a ticket to the top secret Legion training camp through a disaffected former far right activist who had agreed to pass information to HOPE not hate. Larry Nunn and his Western Spring mob made the undercover ITN reporter jump through hoops before they could confirm he was "in".

HNH helped ITN prepare its reporter with a series of briefings and notes to ready him for the weekend. The object of the operation was to catch NA and its secret backers together in defiance of the government's proscription. This added to the urgency of the situation and the belief that it was imperative we get our man, "Vlad" a Russian émigré, into the camp. Nunn was not convinced of "Vlad's" authenticity and only satisfied his paranoia through a series of strained email exchanges right up till the 11th hour.

Confusingly, the Legion camp was planned for the same day as the Alloa demonstration and, adding to a full diary of events and confusion, Raymond flew out to Lithuania for a far-right march through Vilnius the evening before.

In Bakewell, Derbyshire, fewer than a dozen activists bothered to show up for the much vaunted "Legion martial arts club" camp. This was despite a rejuvenated and almost reinvented Mark Collett (of both BNP and "Young, Nazi and Proud" documentary fame) being billed as major contributor to the weekend.

Among those few who could be bothered to attend were convicted Jew-hater Garron Helm, James Mac

from what is left of the bogus Church of the Creator and a smattering of other oddballs, including retired teacher Michael "Gandalf" Woodbridge, and, interestingly, Ally McMahon who owns a gym in Grimsby.

McMahon owns Primal Gym in the town and is considered an expert in the Hollywood-inspired 'Keysi' fighting method. He guided at least one of the sessions, putting the attendees through a series of fight scenarios, though one aged attendee could do little more than waggle his walking stick around and squawk loudly that he wanted to fight "reds".

The group also trained with real knives and spoke throughout about violent confrontations, but there was an obvious air in the room of bitter disappointment at the turnout.

Former NA deputy boss Alex Davies was supposed to attend but is believed to have gone to Lithuania instead of having to face Mark Collett, and also, it transpires, be in the same room as Helm whose high profile and belief that he is under constant surveillance have made him a pariah within the group.

Helm, who served four weeks in prison in 2014 for terrorising Jewish MP Luciana Berger, is no longer the clean-shaven nazi-saluting yob that made the national news. Instead, he shuffled around with long greasy hair and a wispy beard, looking unkempt and sounding unstable.

In almost every conversation Helm had, he exhibited a twisted appreciation of both political and domestic violence. Davies obviously thought the jail term of up to ten years if the group are caught

meeting again, not worth serving for a bedraggled and increasingly paranoid Helm.

Helm was later recorded talking about the murder last year of Labour MP Jo Cox by a nazi sympathiser, a murder his former organisation championed.

"It's not our fault she was killed," he said. "I mean, she did have it coming." He later went on to say, unchallenged by others in the group: "I do think if you're committing an act of treason against, you know, your own ethnic group then by right you should be put to death." He also spoke of parts of the country being "infested" and, further, how some people in NA no longer had any "tolerance of it."

In Alloa, meanwhile, fashion designer Raymond's shiny new flags were flying high as masked former NA members cockily mingled with fellow nazis from the Scottish Defence League, the North East Infidels and National Front, unaware that their ruse was about to be blown by HOPE not hate after the weekend. When challenged by an ITN journalist as to whether they were from NA, the masked individuals reacted violently.

An ITN film crew attended two addresses linked to Raymond in West Sussex to be told he was "out of the country".

After the weekend, ITN decided to pay Helm a home visit in Liverpool and put some of his comments about Cox's murder to him. Firstly, he demanded money but, when ITN refused payment on account of his criminality, Helm's brother became agitated and threatened violence as Helm watched through a gap in the curtains from an upstairs bedroom.

James Mac later issued a video statement excusing



(left to right)
Garron Helm,
Michael "Gandalf"
Woodbridge,
Ally McMahon
and James Mac



Hamish Mcdade added 5 new photos.

Another brilliant day with the lads. Excellent weather too! Cant complain. Scottish dawn!



National Action supporters in Scotland already showing off their new flag

Helm's comments and blaming them on his "immaturity"...some fall from grace for someone whose imprisonment in 2014 sparked one of the most vile and concerted hate campaigns ever seen on social media.

As HOPE not hate's story broke about Raymond trying to tie his new group in with NBU, he drew derision from the rest of the far right for the sexual nature of some of his self-promoting artwork and also for

abandoning some of his former supporters.

It is clear that NA is still active, but grievously split and disorganised. But we know never to judge the danger of the far right and its violent adherents simply by size. Helm, for instance, who once wrote of dying for the cause in a bloody and violent sacrifice, is a resigned and shabby-looking former shadow of himself. Deserted by his friends and those who radicalised him, he's left sitting scruffy and desperate in an armchair looking resigned to another violent act.

A person of additional interest is "Paul Griffin" the bespectacled Canadian who works in the City of London and also goes by the name "Francis Soulie". A character who has been in and around the far right for a number of years, like Nunn, "Soulie" appears to be a man of some means and great drive when it comes to helping radicalise others.

The only question is, how much violent fodder remains?



Paul Griffin aka Francis Soulie

Canadian-born Paul Griffin has been active in Liberty GB, the anti-Muslim "counter-jihad" political party led by Paul Weston and ex-BNP star Jack Buckby. Griffin has also had some early involvement with Pegida UK, the anti-Islam street movement led by former EDL leader Stephen Lennon (aka Tommy Robinson).

Born in Ottawa, Griffin moved to the UK in his early teens, going on to complete an MSci in Geoscience at Durham University. He now resides in London.

Under the pseudonym "Francis Soulie", Griffin has recently taken an organising role in Legion Martial Arts Club (Legion MAC), a group that hosts far right "survival camps". The most recent Legion MAC camp in March included street fighting training and was attended by former members of National Action, Britain's first proscribed white supremacist terrorist group.

Griffin is a regular attendee of the Traditional Britain Group (TBG) that is led by former Tory-fringe leader and convicted fraudster Gregory Lauder-Frost. The TBG holds annual conferences and black tie dinners that attract both far right Tories and extreme rightists.

Under his "Soulie" pseudonym, Griffin has penned a defence of alt-right figurehead Richard Spencer on The Right Stuff (TRS), after Spencer's permanent ban from entering the UK precluded his planned appearance at the TBG in 2016. TRS is a prominent alt-right blog that routinely uses extreme racial and misogynistic slurs in a bid to be as offensive as possible.

Griffin is understood to have addressed the 2014 AGM of the Swinton Circle, a radical right pseudo-think tank organised by former National Front member Alan Harvey, although the relationship between Griffin and Harvey appears to have ended on poor terms in 2015.

Squabbling Over Wilders' Crumbs

By **Cas Mudde**

FOR OVER A decade now, Geert Wilders has dominated the radical right of Dutch politics. As founder, leader and sole member of the *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (Party for Freedom, PVV) Wilders has an iron grip on his party, leading to regular defections and expulsions but none of these seem to hurt his popular support.

In the Dutch parliamentary elections on 15 March, he came in second with 20 seats, well behind the conservative *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy) of prime minister Mark Rutte with 33 seats. The PVV won 13.0 percent of the vote, which was 2.9 percent higher than in 2012, but 2.6 percent lower than in 2010. Most importantly, it was well below what the party had polled in the months before the elections.

But the PVV was not the only populist right party contesting the 2017 elections in the Netherlands. At least three relatively new parties were fighting for the few crumbs Wilders might leave at the far right end of the political spectrum.

All are in some way related to the controversial Dutch referendum of April 2016, in which 61% of voters rejected the Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement. The referendum was an initiative of a collection of radical right groups, spearheaded by *GeenPeil* (NoLevel, GP), built around the right-wing populist website *GeenStijl* (NoStyle, GS) and perhaps best described as a Dutch predecessor of *Breitbart News*.

All three parties have some ties to the referendum campaign and hope to profit from its success. While they present themselves as the voice of the silent majority, they conveniently forget to mention that only 32% of eligible Dutch people voted which means the 61% majority only accounts for just under 20% of the Dutch electorate.

VoorNederland (For the Netherlands, VNL) was founded in April 2014 by two

current members of parliament, Louis Bontes and Joram van Klaveren, and one former MP, Joran Driessen. All three are former PVV MPs who either left or were expelled after disagreements with Wilders.

VNL has had problems finding a suitable leader, after recruiting the well-known but very controversial ex-lawyer Bram Moszkowicz who was kicked out of the party after being its leader for just nine months. In August 2016, VNL announced it had a new leader, Jan Roos, who worked for *GeenStijl* and was the campaign manager of *GeenPeil*. In its election campaign, VNL emphasizes four "pillars":

- integration
- security
- the EU
- tax pressures.

It mainly presents itself as a socio-economically right-wing alternative to the PVV, more in line with the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) than with the Front National (FN).

In fact, it was formerly a member of the Alliance for Direct Democracy in Europe (ADDE), the Euro-party dominated by UKIP, but left over subsidy issues in December 2016. VNL is anti-immigration and staunchly Eurosceptic but does not advocate a "Nexit" – a Dutch exit – from the EU, like the PVV.

VNL performed poorly in the elections, gaining a mere 0.4 percent of the vote. Consequently, it lost its two seats in parliament and will probably disappear into political irrelevance in the not too distant future.

Forum voor Democratie (Democratic Forum, FvD) was founded as a "think tank" in 2015 and was another prominent part of the referendum campaign. It is mostly associated with its leader, Thierry Baudet, an atypical Dutch politician, whose incessant narcissism and self-promotion, as well as his deep desire to be accepted by the



political elite, is reminiscent of the late Pim Fortuyn, who in many ways is the godfather of all these parties.

Baudet has an unhealthy obsession with pro-Russian conspiracy theories about Ukraine and with new US President Donald Trump whom he has described as "a great leader for the West." FvD presents itself as a right-wing populist party that emphasizes the need for plebiscitary initiatives to break the "party cartel" but has strong authoritarian and nativist tendencies as well, mostly linked to Islam and Muslims.

FvD has been able to attract more presentable members than other radical right parties in the Netherlands, including established academics like historian and philosopher Frank Ankersmit (University of Groningen) and legal scholar and philosopher Paul



Jan Roos, who worked for GeenStijl and was the campaign manager of GeenPeil

Cliteur (Leiden University).

Baudet has received disproportionate and very favourable coverage in right-wing British media from tabloids like the *Daily Express* to broadsheets like *The Times*. Recently, the prominent Tory Member of the European Parliament Daniel Hannan, who has done more than anyone to integrate populist radical right politicians into the European political mainstream, tweeted “Good luck to @fvdemocratie in the coming Dutch elections.”

It might have worked, as FvD gained 1.8 percent of the vote, giving it two seats in the new parliament. This will give the media enough excuse to continue to provide disproportionate attention to Baudet that he might be able to use to further grow his new party.

Finally, in December 2016 *GeenPeil*

itself announced that it was becoming a political party. Its leader is Jan Dijkgraaf, a journalist who left the mainstream media to become chief editor of *PowNed*, the TV channel of *GeenStijl*. He said that the lack of follow-up to the referendum by premier Mark Rutte was the main reason for *GeenPeil*'s controversial decision.

Somewhat ironically, given that it is entering a very crowded field, the new party argues that it does not care “about the puppets or power,” that is, about personal gain. The party is mainly populist – its slogan is “Vote for yourself – Choose GeenPeil” – and wants to “recover democracy from within.”

Dijkgraaf summarises the party programme as “The voter is the boss.” GP mainly wants to function as a “hatch” between the people and politics so they

can let the party leaders know what they want them to do.

While the party is Eurosceptic and populist – assuming its voters want it to be – it does not have a strong nativist or Islamophobic image, unlike FvD, PVV and VNL. In a comparative European context, it is more like the Italian Five Star Movement (M5S) than it is to UKIP or FN.

GeenPeil did not register in the polls and this was reflected in the election result, where it scored 0.0 percent of the vote. It will probably re-focus its energy to challenging the political establishment by organising referenda (although the new government is very likely going to change the referendum law, making it much more difficult for another EU-Ukraine upset).

CROATIA | A-HSP marches

FROM MARTIN BARIĆ IN ZAGREB

MEMBERS OF THE fringe extreme- right wing party A-HSP (Autochthonous Croatian Party of Rights) held a rally in the capital of Zagreb on 26 February, displaying the flags of the Nazi puppet Independent State of Croatia, the German nazi NPD and the USA. Following a short march in makeshift black uniforms, the rabble gathered on the central city square, forming a paramilitary cordon. After yelling out the salute of the Ustaša Nazi collaborationist movement "Za dom spremni" (*For the homeland – ready!*), they performed a loosely orchestrated "oath of allegiance to the Homeland", ending in a salute to US President Trump.

A-HSP head Dražen Keleminec, previously charged with incitement to hatred on several occasions, was arrested with misdemeanour charges after the rally.

A counter-protest was held in the main square, but was small in size, due to the nazi rally being largely unannounced.



New hate mob launched

AN OUTFIT BEARING the trademarks of a hate group – Projekt Velebit, named after one of the highest mountains in Croatia – has registered as an NGO. The organisation has been launched by a close-knit group of right-wing extremists with media ties living in Croatia – and their counterparts in Australia – to counter what they view as the hegemony of "un-Croatian" elements. Velebit's registration took place after its secretary Marko Jurić – an extremist journalist charged in 2016 with spreading hate speech through his talk show – was fired by his TV employers for inviting viewers to use the Nazi collaborationist salute. In one of its first public appearances, Projekt Velebit held a debate to call attention to "media violence" and a "culture of excessive political correctness, making it impossible to discuss the alleged privileges of Serbs in Croatia." The event was co-organised by Matica Hrvatska, the leading public cultural institution in Croatia, itself bloated with radical nationalists.

Projekt Velebit has a fixation on the position of Serbs in Croatian society, claiming them to be a privileged class of disloyal citizens. The organisation has also sought to re-establish the Croatian Orthodox Church, an unrecognised denomination that existed only under the so-called Independent State of Croatia during WWII whose sole function was to strip Serbs – those who were spared from execution at the hands of the Nazi puppet state – of their national identity.

Apparently Velebit's registered office is owned by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Zagreb which has been known to be supportive of nationalist movements in the past.

FRANCE

Fascist meeting in Lyon draws speakers from across Europe

By Jean-Yves Camus

THE FORUM DE LA NATION is organised by Jeune nation, heir to the outlawed Œuvre française. An annual event, which usually gathers 300-500 attendees from all over France, it is becoming one of the most radical rallies in France, with fascists, antisemites and Holocaust-deniers taking their turn on stage and denouncing "Jewish" conspiracies against the White race and traditional France. The 2017 event was held under the motto of "In spite of State repression, the nations are waking up". Master of ceremonies was Yvan Benedetti, leader of Œuvre française – until it was outlawed in 2013 – and now spokesman for the Parti Nationaliste Français. Lyon, France's third-ranking city, is his stronghold and, until Marine Le Pen kicked them out of the Front National in 2011, quite a few FN elected officials in this region held dual membership with Œuvre française which is a Petainist, anti-Jewish, fascist movement.

This year's rally featured some prominent Jew-baiters such as Jérôme Bourbon, the editor of the weekly newspaper *Rivarol*, Hervé Ryssen, the author of many *Der Stürmer*-like self-published books on the Jews. Alison Chabloz from the UK and the London Forum was also there, having attended Robert Faurisson's 88th birthday party in Vichy (where else?). The usual foreign guests of Jeune Nation were present: Gonzalo Martin from the Spanish Democracia Nacional, José Ignacio Irusta from La Phalange, Radu Creanga, from the Romanian Iron Guardist Fondation Ogoranu and Samuel Klay from the Swiss Résistance helvétique, a national-revolutionary movement launched in 2014.

Œuvre française before it was outlawed in 2013



HUNGARY

Vona demands new referendum

By István Tóth

IN AN ATTEMPT to become a real challenger to PM Viktor Orbán in next year's national election, Gábor Vona, leader of the far right Jobbik, is shedding his skin. This slow metamorphosis started with Vona's *Hanukkah* greetings to the heads of Hungarian Jewish religious organisations last year. With the influx of migrants, Jobbik's fascination with Islam and admiration for Iran seems to have gone into fade mode, Jobbik's leader now considering Holocaust denial overblown and "losing" his anti-Israeli views.

The *Hanukkah* affair caused ructions in Jobbik, party members turning against Vona in previous party strongholds like Debrecen, Vecses, Vámosmikola and Nemeshetes. Disappointed Jobbik members, even its close allies, like leaders of the fascist Outlaws Army and the banned Magyar Garda (Hungarian Guard) have organised anti-Vona demonstrations. These rebels not only complain about Vona's *Hanukkah* letter but also about Jobbik's abandonment of its radical political strategy. Attila Agh, a famous Hungarian political scientist, thinks Vona's new strategy, for the time being at least, has not resulted in any spectacular growth in Jobbik's popularity. On the other hand, it has not collapsed either.

Opposition to Vona remains small and he still has the majority of the party leadership behind him but it is difficult to predict whether his new strategy can achieve its aim of attracting voters from the left and from a large group of the undecided.

Gabor Vona at the Congress of the Youth section of the JOBBIK, held on 4th March 2017.
Photo: MTI/Kovács Tamás.



Two court victories against nazi rallies

By Bernard Rorke

THE HUNGARIAN Civil Liberties Union (HCLU) has scored a victory with a Supreme Court ruling that police failure to protect Roma from racist threats and abuse amounted to harassment under the Equal Treatment Act. The case arose out of events in Gyöngyöspata in 2011, when uniformed nazi groups organised illegal patrols and laid siege to the Roma neighbourhood for a couple of weeks while police simply stood by.

This is the second such judgment against Hungarian police for inaction during nazi rallies. In January, the Helsinki Committee won a case in the European Court of Human Rights which found that Roma were left without legal protection in the village of Devcser when violence broke out during an anti-Roma demonstration attended by nine far right groups and members of the fascist Jobbik, "the aim of which was no less than the organised intimidation of the Roma community."

Both the HCLU and the Helsinki Committee have been singled out by the government in its recent brazen attack on civil society organisations as "paid political agents" to be swept out of the country. This authoritarian posturing was given an added racist twist on 28 February when premier Viktor Orbán defined "ethnic homogeneity" as key to economic success, and argued that "too much mixing causes problems."

Orbán stated: "We have enough problems with our own ethnic relations. We don't need an immigrant ethnic group." A day earlier, his government announced it was building a new barbed-wire "smart fence" as a "complementary second line of defense" against migrants.

SERBIA | New racist football outburst

From Daško Milinović in Novi Sad



UNITED FORCE, the notorious racist Belgrade hooligan firm of FC Rad, has caused yet another shameful incident for Serbian football. During an FC Rad vs FC Partizan match, fascists belonging to United Force verbally abused Everton Luiz, a Brazilian-born forward playing for Partizan. Supporters of Rad also unveiled a racially offensive banner that was later removed by stewards but the hooligans persisted even after being warned by the referee and announcers to cease the abuse, making monkey noises in Luiz's direction.

Angered, Luiz shouted back and displayed retaliatory hand gestures towards the baying racist mob on the terraces. This led FC Rad's players to charge towards him and try to intimidate him further. The Partizan squad, however, came to aid of their fellow team member and the referee had to intervene. Luiz subsequently left the pitch in tears. After the match, the expected racist comments by Rad hooligans were overshadowed by equally racist and racist-apologist statements by FC Rad's management. However, the club has been fined and ordered to play its next three games behind closed doors. Luiz was also fined for taking part in the brawl. On the bright side, this racist display of both the club and supporters prompted, so far at least, the biggest anti-racist response by the Serbian public and football fans.

New international alt-right movement formed

HOPE not hate and **EXPO** investigate



Colin Robertson, of Millennial Woes, in the blue shirt. ©Expo

London Forum
supporters were
handing out business
cards



A NEW international alt-right movement has been formed, bringing together far right groups from across the US and Europe. Simply called Altright, it merges the three main alt-right operations in the world and will have a major influence on the far right across North America and Europe.

News of this new organisation emerged at a far right conference held in the Swedish capital, Stockholm.

The event, called Identitarian Ideas IX and organised by leading alt-right figure Daniel Friberg, saw over 300 people attend from the UK, Sweden, America, Canada, Australia, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Poland and the Netherlands.

Working together, HOPE not hate and the Swedish anti-fascist magazine EXPO sent researchers into the conference and also photographed it from outside.

The Alternative Right

The alternative right – *aka* alt-right – is an international crew of groups and individuals whose core belief is that “white identity” is under attack by so-called “social justice warriors” and pro-multicultural and liberal elites using “political correctness” to undermine western civilization and the rights of white males.

Its roots lie in the so-called “reactosphere” or “Dark enlightenment”, a community of bloggers active since the 2000s.

In the UK, the alt-right has some overlap with the ‘New right’, a broad alliance of new and more traditional far right activists and a contingent from the UK-based London Forum attended the conference. They were joined by members of Swedish far right groups including the fascist Nordic Youth, the fascist “media outlet” Motgift and the hardcore nazi Nordic Resistance Movement.

Also present was leading “counter-jihadist” and antisemite Ingrid Carlqvist who co-runs Dispatch international and, until 2016, was a prolific writer for the US-based Gatestone Institute that has close links to Donald Trump’s administration. Her presence, in a room full of unrepentant nazis, will severely embarrass and damage any claims by the international counter-jihad milieu that it is not extreme.

Speakers at the event included Henrik Palmgren from the alt-right platform Red Ice, Magnus Söderman, the former chief ideologue of the openly Nazi Swedish Resistance Movement and Rueben Kaalep who leads the youth movement of the

Estonian Blue Awakening.

Arktos Books – an alt-right publishing house founded by the Swedish ex-skinhead Daniel Friberg and the American John B. Morgan in November 2009 and now based in Budapest – opened the event by outlining the recent merger of three of the movement’s leading organisations: Arktos Books, Red Ice and the Richard Spencer’s infamous National Policy Institute (NPI). The new group, Altright, has a single board and an office in central Washington DC.

The Board of Directors for the new organisation includes Daniel Friberg, Jason Jorjani, Henrik Palmgren, William Regnery, Richard Spencer and Tor Westman.

The American editor will be Richard Spencer, while Daniel Friberg is European editor. The Culture editor will be Jason Jordan.

White supremacist

Also speaking at the event was the Scottish bedroom blogger Millennial Woes, recently identified as Colin Robertson from Linlithgow. His short but extreme speech left the audience under no illusions about his belief in racial nationalism, even quoting the notorious “14 words”, a white supremacist motto that states: “We must secure the existence of our

people and a future for white children”.

Conspicuous by their absence were leading US alt-right figures Richard Spencer and Greg Johnson. It was announced at the conference that Spencer had been banned from entering the EU while Johnson had been due to speak but had pulled out at the last minute.

During a period when the alt-right has been experiencing infighting and splits, the amalgamation of the three most substantial and influential groups is significant. Importantly, the merger brings closer together a number of previously-linked, but distinct, schools of far right thought: New Right, Archeofuturism, the Fourth Political Theory and the Identitarian movement.

As Jorjani put it at the conference, the merger “represents nothing less than the integration of all of the aforementioned European right-wing schools of thought with the North American vanguard movement most responsible for the electoral victory of President Trump.”

While he dramatically over-estimated their influence as a movement, the “merger” remains an important development of the alt-right and the growing internationalisation of far right politics. ●

Stop fixing, start listening

Safya Khan-Ruf reports from the HOPE not hate post-industrial communities conference

LISTENING, NOT MYTH BUSTING, is the best way to engage with post-industrial communities, HOPE not hate speakers stressed at a conference in Leeds in March, focusing on the challenges of revitalising impoverished communities.

This was the first such conference organised by HOPE not hate to address the sharp inequalities felt in post-industrial areas.

"We need to understand the deep thread of powerlessness and of being ignored that is felt in these communities – as well as the belief that other people are being heard while they are not," warned John Denham, former Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

A Future For Post Industrial Communities? was co-hosted by HOPE not hate, the Centre for Employment Relations Innovation and Change (CERIC) and the Leeds Social Sciences Institute (LSSI) on the 23 and 24 March.

Social realities

The UK is one of the most centralised countries in the world and many of the places that previously had heavy industry or mining have scant local democratic control over their communities.

Academics at the conference described how these areas had already been abandoned by mainstream politicians and the political process by the time UKIP and other far right groups came knocking on doors.

Andrew Wallace, a sociologist at Leeds University, described how "gentrification" of certain areas went hand in hand with the reduction of social housing. "The government's focus on big cities has been to the detriment of post-industrial areas and the cuts on social funds compound that sense of disregard," he said.

These de-industrialised areas now have increasing numbers of workers with

no job security, working for very low pay. "People have four or five jobs, on zero-hour contracts but they're still scrimping at the supermarket," stated Jo McBride, lecturer in industrial relations from Bradford and Newcastle Universities. "One of them told me: 'I don't get to put my kids to bed at night because I'm never there,'" she said.

An Oxford University study showed that compared with the rest of Europe, Britain's economy shifted towards low-skilled jobs – which were cheaper to create – and less towards high-skilled ones between 1996 and 2008.

Flexible employment and a minimum wage that is lower than in many parts of Europe made it easy to hire people. The study also found a correlation between countries with strong trade union membership such as Denmark and a bigger growth of high-skill jobs.

UK wages have slumped 10% since the financial crisis, worse than anywhere else in Europe apart from Greece, according to a Trades Union Congress report published last year.

Whyeda Gill-McLure, an industrial relations lecturer at Wolverhampton University, told the conference that for local communities to revive, the root causes of the decline – marketisation and austerity – would need to be reduced. "Councillors and unions hoped things would get better after the austerity years but, instead, it produced a continuous increasing crisis," she said.

Meanwhile, Hilary Benn, Labour MP for Leeds Central, stressed the importance of investment in communities for growth to happen. He identified social care, housing and future work as the three challenges to solve.

However, how investment occurs would decide the impact, according to Rachel Laurence, principal director of communities and localities at the New Economics Foundation. She called for more discussion on how investments reach communities and how the wealth

could be retained locally. "It is important to ask who extracts the wealth from an investment and whether the community can actually benefit," she said.

Health

Health is another issue where inequalities across the UK remain stark. Clare Bambra, from the Institute of Health and Society at Newcastle University, said this inequality was "a political matter and was not about a paternalistic behaviour change".

Unlike Germany where the four-year life expectancy gap was bridged between east and the west after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, UK health inequality has increased. The life expectancy gap



in Stockton-on-Tees is 17 years between areas with money and areas without.

Oxfam reported last year that the UK was one of the most unequal countries in the developing world. The charity stated this inequality contributed to the results of the referendum on European Union membership.

"The referendum brought divisions within our country to a head, with many people expressing distrust and disconnection with political processes and voting for change in the hope that it would improve their economic position," it said.

Simon Duffy, director of the Centre for Welfare Reform, added that inequality was at the root of people's anger and affected things like the Brexit vote.

Listening, not acting

Engaging with communities instead of arriving with solutions was vital according to many of the conference speakers, which included people from the labour and trade union movements,

community activists and academics. Many met for the first time in workshops, which focused on listening and not alienating those being addressed.

One audience member pointed out there was a disconnect between the issues and language discussed in the communities and that of mainstream human rights and social justice NGOs. This disconnect is partly why HOPE not Hate focuses much of its strategy in communities around listening instead of providing solutions in a top-down manner.

"We need to step back from Napoleonic forms of leadership, of defining reality and giving hope so as to give space for other people to define reality and make hope for themselves. For meaningful change, we need to let go of our need to always take initiative and instead... listen," said Reverend Al Barrett from Hodge Hill Church Birmingham.

Racist terms and ideas are rife in de-industrialised communities, but HOPE not hate speakers emphasised that

engagement was all the more important because of these ideas. "Trump won because people thought – despite his terrifying policies – at least he's listening. Truly listening means you have to suspend judgement; you have to really listen to what people are saying about who they are," declared Hilary Benn. This has been made more difficult by the erosion of community structures and the lack of buildings that can be used as meeting places.

Throughout the conference there was discussion on what terminology and descriptions to give to post industrial communities. Martin O'Neil, a research fellow at the University of Cardiff and originally from Merthyr Tydfil, cautioned against categorising these places as sad or in need of eradication. "We need to make these areas places people want to live in," he said.

Racist or not?


While ethnic minorities do not cause the economic challenges facing de-industrialised communities, it is a powerful myth adopted by certain groups. It presents a simple claim that divides the white and ethnic minority communities despite shared history.

Gillian Evans, an urban anthropologist at the University of Manchester, said political work on the right aims to fracture the working class across ethnic groups. "How has the working class somehow become only white?" she asked.

A report published last month by Runnymede, a race and equality think tank, stated that the Brexit split between white working class and ethnic minority voters was symptomatic of how anti-immigration sentiment was being used to divide working class communities. "Indeed the white and ethnic minority working class are often set against each other, even though they share many interests, such as the need for jobs, equality and housing," the report stated.

HOPE not hate organiser John Page said it was important to differentiate between people who hold racist views and those whose racism is part of their core identity. "Racism in our context is scapegoating, it's become political, Farage and other people use it to take power," added urban geographer Stuart Hodgkinson.





NOPE

**TAKE A STAND
AGAINST
FARAGE'S LIES
SUPPORT OUR
LEGAL CASE**

It's time to take a stand against liars who bully
and attempt to shout down those who
peacefully disagree with them.

This case is not about money for HOPE not hate,
it is quite simply about telling the truth.
It's about saying No More to Farage's fake news.

www.hopenothate.org.uk